



CONGREGATIONAL HYMN-SINGING

Congregational Hymn-Singing

by

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*With a Survey of Modern
Congregational Musical Worship by
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LONDON

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Printed in Great Britain
by The Temple Press Letchworth
for

J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd.
Aldine House Bedford St. London

Toronto . Vancouver
Melbourne . Wellington

First Published 1933

BV310

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Impur.

PREFACE

Experientia docet. Indeed, almost the only way to a full understanding of congregational singing is such life-long experience as has fallen to the writer's lot. First, as a boy, he listened Sunday after Sunday to the singing of hymns unaccompanied, by a large congregation, from an abundant stock of tunes. A few years later he was being drilled in medieval plainsong with modern accompaniment, under strict injunction not to keep any time: a strange contrast to his earlier experience. An admirable corrective came later on, in the daily opportunity of hearing the best cathedral music played or accompanied by one of the finest of organists. And again by way of contrast there was the rendering of simple hymn tunes on a French harmonium before a packed and conservative congregation. And to fill in the gaps, as it were, there was the experience gained in the training of village choirs, in singing in choral societies, and in the daily accompanying of hymns on the organ.

New experience has come by way of books. For once when a fresh selection of tunes appeared, the writer was one of a group who studied and criticized the book, and eventually recommended it. Some fifteen years later it was the writer's lot, together with four others, to criticize adversely a certain hymnal, and to secure its amendment. A whole generation later the critic was called upon to share in constructive work. It would seem, in fact, that it has fallen to the writer's good fortune to experience congregational singing from every possible angle.

And still this question is as urgent as ever it was: What are the needs of a congregation, both in words and in music?

The privilege of helping to prepare a text which may foster the devotion of another generation is great. And three years' work has brought a realization of the service that has been rendered to religion throughout the centuries by the singing of hymns. It would seem as though popular devotion may be gauged by this democratic custom. Religion in her silver slippers may listen daintily to chants, anthems, oratorios; in her workaday shoes she sings for herself. In her hours of ease she reads the psalmody of the past; in her days of activity she expresses her life and feeling in new hymns.

With such thoughts and with such experience, the present chapters have been written. But the more closely attention is given to the tastes and the needs of one denomination, the less is known of feelings and usage in wider fields. Therefore it has been pleasant to obtain a survey of modern congregational musical worship from one who has been trained to appreciate it, and is taking no small share in guiding it: Dr. Eric H. Thiman.

W. T. W.

1933.

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To Hephzibah tune, without further apology,
The last five verses of the third section
Of the seventeenth hymn of Whitfield's collection,
To conclude with the doxology.

BROWNING.

CHAPTER I

CONTINENTAL PREPARATION

Beside the appointed singers who mount the ambo and sing from the book, others shall not sing in the church.

Council of Laodicea, Fourth Century.

The chancel shall be reserved to the choirs of singing clerics.

Second Synod of Tours, Sixth Century.

CHAPTER I

CONTINENTAL PREPARATION

THE Christian Church sang hymns from the beginning. Its first members being Jews, they continued using the Psalms, doubtless with their traditional music; but the utterances of Mary, Zechariah, Simeon, are only the earliest examples of a new wave of song, of which other traces are in Ephesians 5th, 1 Timothy, Revelation. Round Alexandria Philo knew communities of Jews who on the eve of Pentecost formed a choir of men and a choir of women, who sang hymns composed to the praise of God, in many metres, and to various melodies, sometimes in unison, sometimes with antiphonal harmonies. Something of this kind was introduced by Ignatius at Antioch, and was commended by him to Rome. Within a few years the Roman governor Pliny reported to the emperor Trajan from Bithynia that the whole congregation used to sing responsively a hymn to Christ as God. From Rome and Carthage we hear of both congregational and solo singing of original hymns in the second century.

These early customs bring before us the subject to be studied here, the Congregational Singing of Hymns. There are three strands in this clue, and each is to be carefully distinguished from a substitute. Hymns, new religious poems, expressing the religious aspirations of different ages and communities; not psalms, which are but the earliest Jewish hymns. Singing, not mere literary writing, nor accompanying of singing by

musical instruments. Singing by a congregation as a whole, not the performance of elaborate music by trained choirs. These alternates call for occasional mention, for they influenced the Congregational Singing of Hymns; but they are not seriously studied here. But each of these three strands has influenced the other two continuously, and the inter-action deserves attention.

We may note a few national contributions to the development, especially by Jews, Persians, Greeks, Romanized barbarians.

Jewish poetry depended chiefly on balance of thought, not on rhyme or metre. As thought is independent of language, any version can reproduce this feature of balanced thought, and we retain most of the beauty of Hebrew poetry in such a translation as

The heavens declare the glory of God,
The firmament showeth His handiwork.

The Jews knew the combination of solo and refrain by the multitude, from the days of the Song of Miriam. They had popular songs to beguile the pilgrimage walks, as Psalm 121 and all the Songs of Ascent. They had elaborate anthems for one or two soloists, with responsive choirs, as Psalm 118. They had a magnificent orchestra at the temple, which got its great opportunity in responding to Psalm 150. So the Jewish contribution to Christian hymnody was abundant and varied. Christians instinctively took over much just as it stood; edited more, as the Odes of Solomon; and improvised more, as in

Manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit,
Seen of angels;
Preached among the nations, believed on in the world,
Received up into glory.

On the Euphrates the Jews were peculiarly strong, and they influenced the Christian Church which sprang up there. This lived for the most part under Persian rule, and developed on different lines from that in the Roman Empire, which labelled it, most unjustly, Nestorian. This Persian Church, which always used Syriac as its language, was most prolific in song; but its hymnody is hardly known in the West, and very few versions have been made; while the great Hymn of the Soul, which is available in English, is far too long for congregational use. And the naturalness of singing is well shown in that in the very early novel entitled *The Acts of Thomas*, the apostle is represented as responding to an insult by beginning to sing; and his song is given, though it is expressly said that it was in the Hebrew tongue, i.e. Aramaic or Syriac.¹

In Greek religious circles, worship in the form of solo and chorus was familiar, so this was readily transferred to Christian worship. In the very early novel entitled *The Acts of John*, Jesus is represented as gathering the apostles and standing them with joined hands in a ring around Him: He began then to sing a hymn and to say, 'Glory be to thee, Father', and we, going about in a ring, answered Him, Amen. 'Glory be to thee, Word: Glory be to thee, Grace': Amen. 'Glory be to thee, Spirit: Glory be to thee, Holy One: Glory be to thy Glory': Amen. At the end of the long hymn and refrain, the episode closes: Thus, my beloved, having danced with us, the Lord went forth.² Now this novel came from a circle afterwards called Gnostic; and all the earliest references to hymns belong to this circle.

¹ M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, p. 367.

² *Ibid.*, p. 253.

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One or two are quoted by Hippolytus, from which here is a stanza:

But Jesus said:—Father, behold,
A strife of ills across the earth
Wanders from thy breath of wrath,
But bitter Chaos seeks to shun,
And knows not how through it to run.
O Father, to do this, me send,
Bearing the seals, I will descend;
Through all the ages will I sweep,
Unravel every mystery deep,
Unveil to them the gods' abode,
And secrets of that holy road
Styled Gnosis, shall to men be showed.¹

Clement of Alexandria declared that a Christian was the true Gnostic, and he boldly appropriated many Gnostic customs, and naturalized them in orthodox circles. A hymn of his to Christ the Saviour has been translated into many tongues; it begins:

Bridle of colts untamed,
Over our wills presiding,
Wing of unwandering birds,
Our flight securely guiding;
Rudder of youth unbending,
Firm against adverse shock;
Shepherd, with wisdom tending
Lambs of the royal flock.²

An evening hymn is also preserved by Clement:

Serene light of the holy Glory.

Longfellow's paraphrase has been set to music by Sir Arthur Sullivan in the *Golden Legend*:

O gladsome light of the Father immortal.

In connection with the Church at Rome, while it still

Against Heresies, V, 5.

² *Instructor*, III, xii.

used Greek, it is recalled by Eusebius that whatever psalms and hymns were written by the brethren from the beginning, celebrated Christ the Word of God, confessing His divinity.¹

A bishop of Antioch stopped the psalms that were sung in honour of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the late compositions of modern men; and further scandalized his brethren by preparing women to sing at the great festival in the midst of the church, in honour of himself.² The solo-and-chorus form established itself in regular circles, the bishop of Tyre writing a hymn of twenty-four verses which he put into the mouth of Thekla, while the rest, standing together in a circle after the manner of a chorus, responded to her: 'I keep myself pure for Thee, O Bridegroom, and holding a lighted torch, I go to meet thee'.³

The Western Church was slower to compose hymns, but when it began, it made a new contribution, neglecting the Greek ideals of poetry, and developing something more popular, in the direction of rhyme and rhythm.

From Palestine, Jerome wrote back with surprise to Italy and the West, how the ploughmen, vine-dressers, and mowers went about their work singing. The hint was taken, and when a few Greek hymns had been translated into Latin, original compositions began. Almost at once Christian authors discarded the old-fashioned literary forms, the classic poetry which was the preserve of a few men of culture, and fell back on the popular forms. Thus Augustine of Hippo took the hint from Arius, and wrote a psalm against the party of Donatus. As he wished it to be

¹ *Ecclesiastical History*, V, 28.

² *Ibid.*, VII, 30.

³ *Banquet of the Ten Virgins*, XI, 2.

sung by the populace, he helped the memory by making it an acrostic. Dropping the classic dactyls and spondees, he adopted the steady beat, already tramped out by the soldiers on the march: *Ecce Caesar nunc triumphat qui subegit Gallias*.¹ And experimenting with rhyme, he produced lines such as:

quos cum traxissent ad litus, tunc coeperunt separare,
bonos in uasa miserunt, reliquos malos in mare.

By general consent, Hilary of Poitiers, baptized in 350, died 368, was the first who flourished in composing hymns in verse. He felt his way towards rhyme, which always appeals to the masses. He published a Book of Hymns, chiefly about the apostles and martyrs; but only some half-dozen have survived; last century a few were translated into English for liturgical churches.

At Milan, Ambrose popularized congregational song. It is well known how during a long contest with the civil power, his friends thronged the cathedral for some days. To keep up their spirits, they were set to singing the Psalms, one group singing one verse, another answering with the next. The effect of the responses of the psalms, the singing of men, women, maidens, and children, said Ambrose, is like the breaking of the waves of the sea. This antiphonal method proved very popular, and was adopted widely.

But Ambrose was not content with the old Hebrew psalmody; he wrote new hymns on the lines initiated by Hilary, and gathered poems by others. A hundred of these he published in a book, and a dozen Latin hymns of his own have been in constant use through western Europe, from the days of his friend Augustine, who wrote to him: 'How did I weep through thy hymns

¹ Suetonius, *Divus Julius*, 49.

and canticles, touched to the quick by the voices of thy sweet-attuned church!’

Within the last century most have been repeatedly translated into English. Indeed, his early morning hymn, *Aeterne rerum Conditor*, was rendered for English Catholics in 1706, perhaps by Dryden, as

O God, who by alternate sway.

And its sequel, *Splendor paternae gloriae*, which was in the same Catholic primer, has become generally known since 1837 by Chandler’s version:

O Jesu, Lord of heavenly grace.

Ambrose paid equal attention to the music, for already there was a marked tendency to the frivolous, against which Chrysostom and Jerome had protested, while Augustine acknowledged that the sweetness of the song distracted from the meaning of the hymn. From the old Greek melodies he chose a set of four scales, which became the basis of official church music; these ‘plain-songs’ have been revived for us, but most editors add harmonies, which, if used, would alter the effect.

Early in the fifth century, a Spaniard of good family and high rank devoted himself to sacred poetry. Aurelius Prudentius did not find his way to the new style of verse, but discarding the old, he experimented in no fewer than seventeen metres. One small hymn-book was in praise of martyrs, another was adapted to the hours of prayer. These were treated by later editors very freely, and passed into wide use. A familiar example is that from a long poem, *Da puer plectrum*, a hymn was extracted, *Corde natus ex parentis*. In 1854 an English version appeared, fitted with an

original refrain; after a few revisions it came out in the form:

Of the Father's love begotten,

which is often further revised by editors.

Of other writers in this period, it may suffice to mention Venantius Fortunatus, an Italian who settled at Poitiers. His patron, Queen Rhadegund, obtained a fragment of the 'Holy Cross' which was received in great state; for this he wrote the processional hymn, *Vexilla Regis prodeunt*, which passed into general use for Passion Week. Scores of English versions are in use, from an English Catholic hymn of 1687, 'A Broad the Regal Banners flie', to Neale's of 1851, 'The royal banners forward go'. A poem of his on the Resurrection was shortened by many editors, and in 1868 inspired Ellerton to the paraphrase:

Welcome, happy morning! age to age shall say.

Two points may be noted as to the matters treated in these hymns; some tended to be controversial, some to be subjective. If Paul of Samosata set the example of banishing hymns in honour of Christ, and substituting others in honour of himself, the example was widely followed. Arius wrote hymns to popularize his doctrines about Christ, and his opponents followed suit; the intention was as bad as when Toplady and Wesley sang at one another. We may say that it reflected the Greek spirit of faction which had always weakened their politics, and was destined to split and wreck the Church in the East. Then again, whereas the earliest hymns dealt with objective facts, like the earliest confessions, there was a tendency to explore the feelings of the soul, and to set them forth in verse that could easily become luscious.

These two tendencies may somewhat account for the ecclesiastical regulation of hymn-singing. What could be done in the home and the street was beyond control; but in church the bishop was supreme. An early liturgy, attributed to James the brother of the Lord, provides for a Deacon to sing as the Priest bears the gospels to the altar, for the Singers to sing the 'Holy Holy Holy', for the Singers to sing 'Alleluia', for the Singers to sing the song of the Seraphim, for the Singers to sing 'O taste and see that the Lord is good'; but for the people generally there are only simple responses, perhaps said, not sung.¹ And when the State patronized the Church, and gave legal force to the rules laid down by the bishops in their synods, it was absolutely forbidden to the people to sing in church, this being reserved for the choir in the choir-stalls. The so-called Constitutions of the Holy Apostles, really dating from the end of the fourth century, allowed vent to the people at the cemeteries, singing for the martyrs, and at funerals.²

Ireland saw a different development, with its great number of monasteries, and with bishops who had no jurisdiction. The musical traditions of Hilary of Poitiers were acclimatized before 450. Once rooted, alliteration was soon added, as we find in *Patrem precor potentiae*. Rhyme was the next enrichment, and came to its climax shortly before the vikings weakened the Irish Church in the ninth century. These hymns were never incorporated in the liturgy, but seem to have been popular in monastic circles, whence they may have spread generally.³

¹ Ante-Nicene Library, N.Y., VII, 538.

² Book VI, section vi.

³ *Catholic Encyclopædia*, VII, 604. See Todd, *Book of Hymns of the Ancient Church of Ireland*, and *The Irish Liber Hymnorum*.

A new era opened with Gregory of Rome, at the end of the sixth century. This nobleman was successively lawyer, mayor, monk, deacon, agent of the Pope at court, and Pope; in the last capacity he was able to reform the Western Church and its worship, as also to dispatch a mission to Britain; it is only his connection with hymns and tunes that is to be noted here. In standardizing worship, he furthered the tendency to associate definite hymns with definite occasions, on the principle that leads us to connect 'Hark, the herald angels sing' with Christmas. Thus the Roman service-book came to contain different parts of the daily service or the ecclesiastical calendar. All these were, of course, in the language of Rome, Latin, which was still the official language of all western Europe, though the invading tribes were retaining their own tongues. The hymns were not written in the old classical metres of Vergil and Ovid, for Ambrose of Milan had standardized what we call Long Metre; and rhyme had been adopted. As a result, a Latin hymn does not sound uncouth even to those who do not understand it, as a few lines by Thomas of Celano in the thirteenth century will show:

Rex tremendae majestatis
 Qui salvandos salvas gratis,
 Salva me, Fons pietatis.
 Recordare, Jesu pie,
 Quod sum causa tuae viae,
 Ne me perdas illa die.
 Inter oves locum praesta,
 Et ab haedis me sequestra,
 Statuens in parte dextra.

In the first instance Gregory drew up this book for his own city of Rome; but it will readily be understood that a good service-book of such a leading church

tended to spread more and more, so as to be adopted in many places, except where there was strong local tradition, as at Milan.

On the musical side Gregory found two things to reform.

The great development of monastic life had led to the elaboration of choral singing as distinct from congregational. This had led to a great ornamentation of the melody, probably from ordinary secular music. Gregory therefore reverted to the Greek tradition, with which he had come into contact at Constantinople. Ambrose had adopted only four of their scales, he added four more, and abolished all embellishments. In one or other of the eight scales, he selected a few simple melodies, and ordered these to be sung quite straightforwardly, with hardly any variation in the length of each note. They seldom ranged over more than five of our tones.

For prose psalms the same melodies could be used, with a slight variation. The man who set the tune led off with two solo notes, enough to let the congregation recognize which tune he was pitching; they then joined in a recitative on one note for many syllables till the end of the line was neared, when the tune was proceeded with. These Gregorian chants are still in use, and a recent Pope repeated the reform of Gregory, ordering a disuse of modern embellishments and a larger use of the ancient music. We must remember that in our modern books there are usually harmonies added for the organ; to get the ancient effect we must not even play them, but all sing with an attempt at unison, and no particular attempt at time in the modern measured sense, but letting the sense of the words govern.

Gregory started singing schools, and often visited them to ensure that his plans were being carried out. And he took a most important step by inventing a notation which, however crude, yet could at least recall to the singer what he had learnt by ear. Above the words of the hymn he ruled two lines; the position of a full-stop above the upper line, on it, between the lines, on the lower, below the lower, indicated five notes; and on the few occasions when a passing-note was wanted, a comma replaced the full-stop. In this lay the germ of our developed notation of staff and note; the rhythm and rhyme of the words determined the pauses, so no indication of time was needed.

Such was the system of hymns and tunes which Gregory's missionaries brought to Britain, where they were quickly acclimatized in the monasteries.

Organs had been invented in Egypt more than two centuries before Christ. It is said that in the temple at Jerusalem there was one which had a range of ten notes, and had such variety of tone that each note had ten pipes. They were familiar enough for Tertullian to assume that his readers knew their passages for notes, their outlets for sound, the array of their pipes, the hydraulic engine that blew them.¹ At Constantinople before A.D. 393 there was a sculpture showing one with eight notes, blown by two men. Jerome a generation later mentions a larger one at Jerusalem, and by 450 the Spanish churches habitually used them.

But the introduction of an instrument nominally to support the voices, always tends to destroy congregational singing. The performer desires to magnify his office, and desires more and more power, which may even drown the voices. Or he may ally himself

¹ *De Anima*, xiv.

with the best singers, and develop a choir, which, whether amateur or professional, studies music with such zest as to introduce compositions which cannot be followed by the average congregation.

On the other hand, the organ may assist in the development and the appreciation of the scale. It has been observed that purely vocal music rarely recognizes more than five notes within an 'octave' when plain melody is sung; that when harmony comes in, two more intervals establish themselves; and that when instruments are added, finer differences disclose themselves, the piano standardizing twelve, connoisseurs savouring nineteen. And conversely, the disuse of instruments and the disuse of harmony in the region of the Appalachian mountains, have allowed rich Elizabethan folk-songs to degenerate even to bald five-note melodies.

In the interval between Ambrose and Gregory, western Europe had been resettled by Teutonic nations. On the Continent they did leave Roman culture in the largest cities, but in Britain even these were all captured and devastated, with the one exception of London; and even London's last British bishop fled at the end of the sixth century. Thus whatever tradition of Roman music remained was quite divorced from the life of the new population. It remained at best only in the continental monasteries; in the churches where the ordinary folk assembled, synods of clergy deliberately limited song to their own order. The reforms of Gregory emphasized this, and whatever he did for deepening culture, he narrowed it, and really extinguished the song of the congregation. This system, of the clerks singing psalms in Latin, he commended to his missionaries and their converts, probably

not guessing that the language of these Angles was destined to persist and out-rival his own. Thus the Church in Britain for nine centuries had no hymns in the tongue of the people. Whatever the monks accomplished in the field by clearing wastes and improving agriculture, in their cloisters by copying books, in their own churches by their plain-chant and their organs, yet they left the musical taste of the people severely alone, nor taught them to praise God in their own poetry.

CHAPTER II

CATHEDRAL AND MONASTIC SINGING

Daniel agrees to obey the said Prior and Convent; to instruct, train, and teach the said number eight of boys of the chapel of the said monastery in plain-song and harmony, and especially in the masses of the Blessed Mary the Virgin, of the name of Jesus, of the principal feasts, both in those services and in singing vespers, and in the established and ordinary antiphons to be observed daily, and in like manner during the time of Lent. Provided always that if any of the boys belonging to the staff of the aforesaid chapel should desire instruction in the chant called Descant, both how to sing it and how to play it upon the organ, that then such boy or pupil, being on the said staff for instruction in the said art, shall give to the said Daniel every quarter twelve pence for his pains and diligence in teaching that art.

Contract with the Organist of Worcester Cathedral, 1522.

The mass-priests, although they are compelled to give up the Latin idiom, yet most diligently observe the same tone and chants, to which they were accustomed.

HOOPER, to Bullinger, 1549.

CHAPTER II

CATHEDRAL AND MONASTIC SINGING

THE cohesion of all western Europe was possible on one condition, community of language. The price paid for restricting the language of worship, was the limitation of intelligent worship to those who learned Latin. This could be either among the cathedral clergy, or among the monks, who in England were nearly all ordained. In their community life, music could develop.

A pleasant music floats across the mere
From Monks in Ely chanting service high,
While-as Canute the king is rowing by.

When song was thus practised several times a day, experiments were inevitable, to escape monotony. One notable discovery was that the air could be sung an octave above, and that the effect was fair; a further discovery was that another line of song could be added, a fifth above the original air; and in England, perhaps under Welsh influence, the interval of the third was also found pleasant. Then the third below being sung an octave higher was the origin of the later fauxbourdon. And thus a musical scale was gradually elaborated. To indicate this in writing necessitated the adding of two more lines to the stave; as they were innovations, one was red, the other yellow. As this was complicated, Guido of Arezzo, a French teacher of music early in the eleventh century, broke right

away from Gregory's notation which appealed to the eye, and invented a syllabic system. A well-known hymn to John the Baptist had been fitted with a melody such that the six lines began with the six notes then recognized in the scale:

UT queant laxis	RE-sonare fibris
MI-ra gestorum	FA-muli tuorum
SOL-ve polluti	LA-bii reatum.

To teach new melodies, Guido referred to these six syllables to give the appropriate note; it was an easy step to name the six notes by the six syllables of the hymn. Thus the sol-fa system came into being, UT being the point of departure, the keynote.

The early seventeenth century recognized that one more note was needed in the scale, and from the ascription in the same hymn, *Sancte Iohannes*, took the seventh syllable SI. With the change of UT into DOH we have the notation still.¹

Now it may readily be seen that elaborations of notation and of tune betokened that music was ceasing to be popular, and was becoming confined to monks and cathedral canons.

An illustration may be given of a custom so widespread that it is often attributed in its origin to the days of Gregory himself, and the school of music at Rome. Eight days before Christmas, in the vesper service, the singing of the *Magnificat* was embellished with a series of prayers to Christ suggested by the verses of the original. The precise working out of the idea varied at different times and in different

¹ These syllables are now said to be of Arabian origin, adapted by Guido. See various works by H. G. Farmer.

places. At Worcester Cathedral towards the end of the Middle Ages, the Lord Prior sang the first:

O sapientia quae ex ore Altissimi prodisti attingens a fine usque ad finem, fortiter suaviterque disponens omnia; Veni ad docendum nos viam prudentiae.

Other prayers were assigned to the precentor, the kitchen-gardener, the cellarer, the sacristan, the clerk of the works, the chamberlain, the pittance.¹

A study of the 'Antiphons', or of these 'Great O's' in especial, would show the constant struggle between the professional singers who wished to consecrate the highest form of art to God, and the lay worshippers who wished to take some direct part in worship for themselves. These opposite tendencies were shown as early as Athanasius, who mentions the Antiphon as one solution by which both could be combined.² In the western world, the device was simpler, to suit barbarian people, and they simply took the last syllable of the ecclesiastical chant, especially the Alleluia, and sang it to a new melody of their own, without words. Thus Augustine said:

Qui jubilat non verba dicit, sed sonus quidam est laetitiae sine verbo.

The idea may have come from the Hebrew Selah, or it may have been the irrepressible spontaneous claim of the populace. These congregational effects in turn were laid hold of by the professionals, who wrote down the 'Tropes' and fitted words to the melodies. In this change, Notker of St. Gall took the lead, on a hint from Jumièges; and soon monastic 'Sequences' started a long course of development. For instance, at

¹ S. G. Hamilton, *Compotus Rolls of the Priory of Worcester*, viii.

² *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, I, 576.

Canterbury after the murder of archbishop Thomas, a poem was written for his festal day, which began:

Solemne canticum hodie resonet in terra,
Ad palmam Martyris exultet superum caterva.¹

In after days, these sequences have yielded popular hymns, though at the time they ousted the populace. The singular lack of metre is well reflected in the modern version of Notker's most famous sequence:

The strain upraise of joy and praise, Alleluia.

The most beautiful of all sequences is, however, three centuries after his time, though curiously linked with his memory. One of his successors was visiting Rome and talking with Pope Innocent III about him. The Pope had written *Veni sancte Spiritus*, and a copy was taken back to St. Gall and inserted into the service-books there, whence it spread gradually, soon rendered into English, but now used by Catholics in a version of 1668; an Anglican rendering of 1849 has become very popular, while Ray Palmer's translation in the *Andover Sabbath Hymn-Book* of 1858 is that usually reprinted in America and Britain:

Come Holy Ghost! in love.

Of other medieval hymns, it may suffice to mention some modern translations, which may show the wealth of devotion in western Europe.

Draw nigh and take the body of the Lord represents the piety of the Scottish monks from Ireland in the seventh century; while the more advanced architecture of the Continent then is reflected in the dedication hymn,

Christ is our corner-stone.

¹ Neale, *Sequentiae*, XLI.

A hundred years later, Worcester was singing

Sing Hallelujah forth in duteous praise;

while Bede was writing hymns, only a few of which remain, and in his *De Arte Metrica* was teaching the principles of accent. When English religion was fructifying the mainland, Theodulf of Orleans wrote

All glory, laud and honour;

then at Chartres the great teacher Fulbert attained such fame that English scholars went to him, and King Canute subscribed for the rebuilding of his church. A poem on the nightingale was to be sung to lyre, monochord, and organ. Among his twenty-seven hymns is the original of

Ye choirs of new Jerusalem.

France took the lead with the twelfth century; the very hymn-book that Abélard sent to Héloïse in her convent may be seen; but for popular devotion we turn to his great rival, Bernard of Clairvaux, a master of rhyme, well represented in modern versions:

Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts,

Jesus, the very thought of Thee,

O Jesus, king most wonderful,

O sacred head, once wounded.

Frenchmen made other experiments with music, and while the main body of voices held on with the melody, one or two would break away and improvise another melody, often rather higher; thus to the *cantus primus* was added a descant. The increasing

elaboration of the monastic music may be seen in an early thirteenth-century book, nearly the only specimen surviving of the English medieval antiphonars.¹ The service on Palm Sunday at Worcester arranged that after the palms were blessed, they were distributed to the monks while two anthems were sung: 'The children of the Hebrews', etc. A grand procession left by the south door and went eastward, singing four anthems as it went round the cathedral and reached the belfry: there a smaller procession out of the north door met it, and all sang a seventh anthem. Four chanters gave the *Osanna*; all sang an eighth anthem, the bishop intoned three *Aves*, and the convent responded. All marched to the north door and sat down while the precentor sang a solo, four chanters gave a versicle, all stood for one response, and a picked choir on top of the porch closed with the *Gloria*. Magnificent as this might be, there is not any hint that any of the public could join or do anything but watch. It illustrates the verdict, from a very exceptional monk of the sixteenth century: 'We have introduced into the churches an elaborate theatrical species of music, accompanied with a tumultuous diversity of voices: all is full of trumpets, cornets, pipes, fiddles, and singing; we come to church as to a playhouse. And for this purpose ample salaries are expended on organists and societies of boys, whose whole time is wasted in learning to sing; not to mention the great revenues which the Church squanders on the stipends of singing men'.²

With the thirteenth century, Italy broke again into

¹ *Transactions of the Worcestershire Archæological Society*, 1925, p. 79.

² Erasmus, quoted by Fosbroke in *British Monachism*, p. 52.

song. Aquinas of the ancient Benedictines gave the stately

Now, my tongue, the mystery telling;

while from the Franciscan friars came such different strains as:

At the cross her station keeping,

Day of wrath, O day of mourning.

In the Netherlands, as the dawn of a new day drew on, someone of the school of Thomas à Kempis produced

Light's abode, celestial Salem.

Now the Flemings greatly developed the art of music, and in Italy produced new effects. First, they drew on new sources for their melodies, instead of limiting themselves to the Gregorian tones; especially they pressed the songs of the people into the service of the Church. Dufay was successful with this innovation at Rome as the fifteenth century began. Next, other parts were sung at the same time, not moving mechanically up or down along with the main melody: the first step towards this was canon, when the same melody was sung, but beginning a few words later, in the style of *Three Blind Mice*. After that, experiments were tried in combining melodies, or in letting other voices sing notes which by themselves would not be melodious in sequence, but in harmony with the main melody sounded well. Thus gradually some effects in counterpoint were worked out.

Latin hymnody, however, fell upon evil days when the Humanists arose. They deliberately revived the models of the Augustan age, in prose and in poetry. That Erasmus translated the New Testament into

Ciceronian Latin is half forgotten, because he incidentally added the original Greek as a voucher for his version; his real point was that Jerome's version was not only *Vulgata*, but vulgar. The same contempt was meted out to accent and rhyme, because they were not Vergilian; and hymnody dried up.

The invention of type-printing was as important for music as for literature. It was adapted to music by Fossombrone, and from that moment the way was open to popularize tunes harmonized simply, and to restore congregational singing. The step was quickly taken by the Hussites, who used both the ecclesiastical Gregorian tones and popular airs. The first printed hymn-book of the Bohemian Brethren was issued in 1505; by 1531 the Brethren issued a German version of their hymns, set to music; and, in a shortened form, one of their chorales is in use with us, *Ravenshaw*. Two of their hymns are in *Lyra Germanica*, the famous Easter hymn:

Christ the Lord is risen again;

and a morning hymn in time of persecution:

Once more the daylight shines abroad.

Meantime the English had taken up with gusto the building of organs. Before 950, Bishop Alphege had installed at Winchester a very powerful instrument, whose organist needed two assistants, and between them they controlled forty tongues. These gave not only the usual seven differences of joyous sounds, but also the lyric semitone. Each performer, 'of concordant spirit', managed his own alphabet instead of playing in unison. To each note there were ten pipes, but there was no device for using any of

them separately. So there were twenty-six bellows, worked by seventy strong men, and a monk proudly recorded: 'To such an extent does it resound, echoing in every direction, that every one stops his gaping ears with his hand, being quite unable to draw near and bear the sound; the music is heard all over the town'. This was, of course, an exceptional instrument, and the usual range was only ten notes, while with a single set of pipes a pair of hand-bellows could be blown by the player himself, who was able to carry the instrument in procession. But as the fame of the Winchester organ flew abroad over the whole country, the impulse was given to build mammoth instruments which quite cast choristers into the shade; and England won some fame from the custom of gilding the pipes. Mechanical invention was applied in many direction; slides to open the wind supply were replaced by levers, and these were diminished in size to near our modern keys; semitones were introduced between the main tones of the scale; pipes were arranged in sets, and means found to 'stop' off one or more sets; pipes of large size were added to be worked by feet as well as hands; the range of notes was increased little by little from the old ten, until when All Hallows Barking contracted for an organ in 1519, there were 'xxvij playne keyes', and the compass was 'double *Ce-fa-ut*', which is interpreted as from CC up to C in alt.

This extension of mechanical music was at all times opposed from religious motives. The Eastern Church has steadily forbidden organs of any description; reforming orders like the Cistercians did not adopt them; Gilbert of Sempringham went further and banned all music whatever: 'They shall say the Psalms in monotone, in the spirit of humility, rather than

pervert the minds of the weak, like the daughter of Herodias'. Many other clergy were suspicious of organs; Thomas Aquinas objecting to the way they took attention off the meaning of the words.

It almost seems as if the great patrons of these instruments were the monks wearied with their monotonous and frequent services, and rich burghers proud of their churches and anxious to enrich them. Thus in the thirteenth century the church at Heybridge had a little pair of organs, and the church at Kirkby one pair.¹ Two hundred years later, Sir John Sturgeon, Lord Mayor of London, not only brought a mercer to sing in the choir at Hitchin, and maintained two singing children, and provided in his will for these and for two singing priests, but he also bequeathed forty shillings for 'a cunnyng man playing organns in the church'. And a fellow-townsmen in 1530 willed four pounds 'unto the mending of the organs of the White Friars.'² In the same decade organs are mentioned at Martock, portatives standing in the chancel of Norton Fitzwarren, and new organs instead of old at Windsor; legacies by laymen and purchases by churchwardens.³

The demand for simplicity, both as to organs and as to singing, was voiced often; and remarkably enough, by the secular clergy. Thus in 1536, Convocation styled 'the playing at the organyes a foolish vanity', a sentiment echoed in 1563. Cranmer reported to the king as to the new English liturgy that 'the song made therunto should not be so full of notes, but as near as may be for every syllable a note, that it may

¹ *Visitation of Churches belonging to St. Paul's Cathedral* (Camden Society).

² R. L. Hine, *History of Hitchin*, I, 93.

³ *Notes and Queries*, clxii, 67.

be sung distinctly and devoutly'. That is, plain-song, in contrast to 'the quavering, operose music which is called figured'. Elizabeth partly agreed, and in 1559, while she continued the endowments for singing men and boys to preserve the laudable science of music, she enjoined a modest and distinct song in all parts of the common prayer, so that this might 'be as plainly understood as if read without singing, and yet for the comforting of such as delight in musick'. She was hardly obeyed in this; and in 1586 she was petitioned 'that all cathedral churches may be put down where the service of God is grievously abused by piping with organs, singing, ringing and trowling of psalms from one side of the choir to another'. Monks were obsolete, but their style survived.

There can be no doubt that the steady elaboration of musical service completely prevented any popular congregational singing, even in Latin. Song there was, but it was no longer used in official worship. Of what nature it was, is our next concern. The contrast is well illustrated in a morality play, the *Interlude of the Four Elements*:

Humanity. Pryk song may not be dispysed,

For therewith God is well plesyd,

Honowred, praysyd, and servyd

In the Church oft tymes among.

Ygnorauce. Is God well pleasyd, trowst thou, therby?

Nay, nay, for there is no reason why:

For is it not as good to say playnly

'Give me a spade',

As

'Gyf me a spa, ve, va, ve, va, va-de'?

But yf thou wylt have a song that is gode,

I have one of Robin Hode

The best that ever was made.¹

¹ *The Interlude of the Four Elements*, cited in Coulton, *Social Life*, p. 265.

CHAPTER III

ENGLISH SONG TILL 1500

In their musical concerts the Welsh do not sing in unison like the inhabitants of other countries, but in many different parts; so that in a company of singers, which one very often meets with in Wales, you will hear as many different parts and voices as there are performers. On the borders of Yorkshire the inhabitants make use of the same kind of symphonious harmony. . . . The children, even from their infancy, sing in the same manner. . . . I believe that the natives contracted their mode of singing from the Danes and Norwegians.

GIRALDUS CAMBRENSIS.

CHAPTER III

ENGLISH SONG TILL 1500

THE English were a musical race; we hear constantly of the gleemen with their harps, and of the custom in a thegn's hall of passing round the instrument that any one might improvise a song. The sagas were memorized and sung by the more professional singers, and Longfellow has caught the spirit of them in his story how Christianity was forced upon the Norsemen.

The tale is well known how in the abbey at Whitby, the serving-men were whiling away a long evening with song, and Cædmon slipped out, being unable to improvise; how in the cattle byre he dreamed, and next night reached for the harp, to sing a paraphrase of the Creation story. From his lips came thereafter many songs on Old Testament themes, some on the New, and many on the harrowing of hell. The north of England produced many poets, who were often inspired by the Bible story to sing paraphrases, and occasionally to launch out more originally. Their language is hardly intelligible to us, and the West Saxon of Alfred's gleemen is only to be recognized in Somerset or Dorset. He lamented at the time that when he began to reign, education was so poor south of the Humber, no one could follow the Latin service, nor translate into English a letter written in Latin. It seems a pity that he did not go further, and bring about a reform so that the service should be in English.

Though this was never attempted, and though he and others were content to translate the Bible into

English for the more educated to read, yet the wandering gleemen kept alive the spirit of poetry, and if they often sang of fights and love-making, yet they occasionally had a religious poem. Bridges has well said of the priests, that 'grudging to the heathen what might serve the Church, they took thought to divert it, and engaged the bards to make like stirring balladry of the Bible tales'.¹ It was much as now; in a massive American collection of songs for the home, there will be something for every taste: ragtime dances, negro melodies, tried old ballads, ephemeral novelties, standard hymns, sacred songs, military marches.

This early English poetry was seldom written, but was generally picked up by ear. Yet we have many fragments which after much modernizing in the process of transmission may yet be founded on the words of Cædmon. We have part of the *Poetic Calendar* edited by Alfred, four songs by Cynewulf, who lived about 800, two being on the Ascension and the fates of the Apostles.

The principles of this poetry were two: accent and alliteration; rhyme was rare; syllables were grouped in fives. Rough rules might be thus versified:

Let the same letters link all the line;
 Pause after two beats pick up tunably;
 Match each consonant making a counterpart;
 Interchange vowels each is versatile.

Free imitation of the style may be taken from two poems of the tenth century:

Here died Eadgar ruler of the Angles
 Joy of West-Saxons protector of Mercians
 Kings him widely honoured afar
 Bowed to the king as he deserved.

¹ *Testament of Beauty*, III, 50.

And the song of the battle at Maldon:

Brihtnoth spoke his shield he grasped
Shook he the slender ash and spoke with words
Angry and resolute returned to him the answer.

It will be seen that from this style of poetry little has survived except the pause in the middle and the flexibility of each foot.

Of the music we know singularly little: there was no notation to write down a melody, and tune was therefore transmitted wholly by ear. Musical instruments abounded, but, apart from the organ, only those with strings were ever used for devotional song.¹ The Psalter taught how this could be supported and enriched by an orchestra; and Bede, when commenting on Psalm 52, wrote that 'as a skilful harper, when tightening the strings of his instrument, tunes them to such pitches that the higher may agree with the lower, so the omnipotent God, holding in His hand like a well-strung harp all men predestined to the harmony of heavenly life, raises some to the high pitch of a contemplative life, and lowers others to the gravity of active life'. A copy of the Gospels, written in his age, was illustrated with an angel playing on a citole, an instrument imported from Italy, a little, flat-backed lute. Other instruments were devised, till a 'whole consort' might add to these a gittern, lute, psaltery, and viol. Then from the church the use passed back into the home or the hostel, for solo singing as well as congregational. Chaucer tells of a poor scholar:

For al above ther lay a gay sawtrye,
On which he made, a-nyhtës, melodye
So swetëly, that al the chambre rong,
And *Angelus ad Virginem* he song.

¹ *Old Instruments of Music*, Essex Archæol. Soc., XX, 17-32.

In churches, an ingenious combination of strings, set in vibration by a rosined wheel, with 'tangents' stopping off various lengths, gave a new instrument obviously indebted to the wind-organ, and therefore called the organistrum: this was often used to support the plain-song. Fifty years ago, London streets showed its degenerate descendant, the hurdy-gurdy, and also a modernized portative organ generally supported on a wooden leg.

There is, however, one element often overlooked, despite the clear guidance of Gerald in the twelfth century: the music of the Danes and Northmen, who formed such an important element in the population, from the eastern coast of Ireland, the Isle of Man, and all the shores around, the Hebrides and Orkneys, and all the eastern side of Britain, where the Danelagh testified to their importance. They had a style in music which was all their own; its speciality was that the soloist was accompanied by a second man, singing what was approximately the same melody in a different key—a crude harmony. It can be traced to-day in widely different fields, Wales and Iceland. The Welsh second part is nearly always a third below. The Icelandic is either a fifth above, or, when that would go too high, it drops an octave and becomes a fourth below. Against the church use of this duet, 'twisöngur', the missionaries set a stern face; but it has persisted. And what the people wished to do, and did, in contrast to what the ecclesiastics wished, is exactly our theme.

The Norman conquest submerged Welsh, English, and Danes; the old languages soon ceased to be written, and English verse was handed down only by oral tradition. Even in popular song, the gleeman was at

least balanced, and presently superseded by the troubadour. And this continental songster brought in a new element which altered and enriched the countryman's music; so out of the Breton *balade* arose the British ballad. This was a combination of solo, dance, chorus, such as indeed obtains in many parts of the world. With the dancing we are not concerned; only with the new form of poetry that became popular. Ballads sprang up anonymously, grew naturally, were passed on by the ear, and were not written. There was variety of metre, which may be seen in a collection of *Political Poems and Ballads*. Our long metre is heard in

Sir Jon the Comyn had thai hid
 In haly kirk thai did him qwell;
 And tharefore many a Skottis brid
 With dole er dight that thai most dwell.

This was elaborated on a remarkable scheme of rhyme, found in many ballads of the fifteenth century:

The kaies er golden him of the gate
 Let him now kepe tham if he kan,
 To Calais cum thai all to late,
 Sir Philip and Sir Jon his sun:
 All were ful ferd that thare ware fun,
 Thaire leders may thai barely ban.
 All on this wise was Calais won:
 God save tham that it so gat wan.

Another popular song, against the friars, is in stanzas of twelve lines, schemed 8886.8886.8686. A favourite metre is 886.886, with frequent liberties:

Now God, that es of mightës maste,
 Graunte him grace of the Haly Gaste,
 His heritage to win!
 And Mary moder, of mercy fre,
 Save ourë king and his menie
 Fro sorow & schame & syn.

But more than half the popular ballads are cast in one metre, illustrated by a Scots story about an incident of A.D. 1281:

Make haste, make haste, my merry-men all, our ship shall sail
the morn.

Now ever-alack, my master dear, I fear a deadly storm:
I saw the new moon late yestreen, wi' the auld moon in her
arm;

And I fear, I fear, my master dear, that we shall come to
harm.

Here we have a line of seven beats; usually each beat has one syllable accented, preceded by one unaccented; but occasionally by two unaccented. Each line has a pause after the fourth beat. And two lines are coupled by rhyme at the end. Next from the cycle about Robin Hood:

I never hurt the husbandmen that use to till the ground;

Nor spill their blood that range the wood to follow hawk or
hound:

My chiefest spite to clergy is who-in these days bear a-great
sway

With friars and monks with their fine sprunks I make my
chiefest prey.

Here we have rather more unaccented syllables crowded in, and there is more internal rhyme in the first half of the second lines, but the essential form is the same. The ballad of *Chevy Chace*, in its later forms, shows liberties taken in another way, by varying the place of the accent:

Ere thus I will out-bravèd be, one-of-us two shall die.

I know thee well, an earl thou art, Lord Percy, so am I.

But trust me, Percy, pity-it were, and great offence to kill

Any-of these our guiltless men, for they have done no ill.

These ballads show the typical metre of the English

commonalty. It has been classified with dreadful accuracy as iambic heptameter; a more genial professor calls it the fourteener; but it was called English metre in the days of Queen Elizabeth. The artificiality of Pope is evident when he criticized Chapman's Elizabethan version of the *Iliad* as 'an immeasurable length of verse', for it is simply this standard English ballad metre:

A dreadfull flash burnt through the aire, that savoured
sulphur-like,
Which down before the chariot the dazled horse did strike.

It is the double common metre of our modern hymns.

It is perfectly easy to sing these ballads when learned by ear, though when committed to writing the page may seem disfigured with hyphens and apostrophes, and the pedant may complain about telescoped syllables. The irrepressible free spirit of song still shows itself in ballads quite easy to sing, though the number of syllables varies. From the gleemen to the street-singer in our day, ballads were made for singing and not for reading. It is exactly that feature which makes them so important as leading up to congregational hymn-singing.

About the middle of the fifteenth century, John Shirley collected much verse, and one of his volumes is called: 'A boke cleped the abstracte brevyaire, compyled of diverse balades, roundels, etc.' Some of the tunes also have survived, but while it is conceivable that they were used on the greensward or in the hall, there is no evidence that such words or music formed part of any official worship. Friars, however, were quick to enlist such popular customs in the cause of religion. Of this we have instances in various fifteenth-

century collections; they contain many Christmas carols, and a song of eight stanzas which was written about 1365:

Thynk man querof thou art wrout,
Powre and naked thou were heder browt.
Thynk how Cryst thi sowle hath bowt,
And fond to servyn hym to pay.¹

Another feature in the popular ballad that was destined to pass on into hymns is the burden, refrain, or chorus. As an example, we may take that earliest of songs, still intelligible as written down in the thirteenth century:

Sumer is ycumen in,
Lhudë sing cuccu;
Groweth sed, and bloweth med,
And springth the wodë nu,
Sing cuccu!
Awë bleateth after lomb,
Lhouth after calvë cu;
Bulluc sterteth, buckë verteth,
Murie sing cuccu!
Cuccu, cuccu, well singës thu cuccu,
Ne swik thu naver nu.
Sing cuccu, nu, sing cuccu,
Sing cuccu, sing cuccu, nu! ²

This was set to music, not all in unison, but for six voices; four of which take an old church litany, so modified that it is taken up at different points, the one tune thus providing its own harmony; it is the earliest specimen known of the 'round'. The other two voices provide an accompaniment. Here then we find a combination of the Anglo-Saxon short line, the Norse

¹ Julian, *Dict. Hymn.*, p. 208.

² Grove, *Dict. Mus.*, III, 866.

harmony, the Breton burden, the Latin rhyme, the ecclesiastical notation. Separate streams have blended into one rich flow.

Printers brought to light, two centuries later, the characteristic harmony of ordinary song outside church circles. The first book of music from movable types was issued at Venice in 1501; it gave secular songs, harmonized for several voices, by many writers, a clear evidence of a wide knowledge of music outside ecclesiastical circles. Now the English tradition of harmony had been kept up by John of Dunstable and others, while music had come to be honoured with academic degrees. When Prince Henry was destined for the see of Canterbury, he studied on these lines: when he was deflected to the throne, his fondness for part-singing, and even for 'setting of songs and makynge of ballettes', made this pastime at last quite fashionable. So in 1529 a collection of part-songs was issued at Westminster. To be able to join in these was soon reckoned a matter of course, and this induced leading composers, such as Tallys, Tye, Shepherde, Byrd, to develop this side of their art. It appears quite detached from church usage in 1571, when Thomas Whythorne published for three, four, and five voices. He deliberately catered for those who were not musicians, offering them both hard and easy, some solemn and some merry.

The old style of church music had been shattered, and its books destroyed. English was at last adopted as the tongue for public worship, and on the prose side a Book of Common Prayer was produced which has won affection and has voiced devotion, in many lands, for centuries. But little was offered to match it in poetry or in music, and for these the first impulse

came most distinctly from the Continent. But we may note another result of the invention of printing, which at first followed slavishly the current methods of writing. Among other consequences it settled the way in which hymns should be printed. The story of this is so curious that it may be traced hastily, for it shows the intense conservatism that has always reigned in ecclesiastical circles.

When the early Christians wanted copies of the scriptures, they soon had recourse to professional scribes. These derived their methods largely from Egypt, where on a roll of papyrus the writing was in a narrow column, so that the reader could hold the portion of the roll already read, and re-rolled, in his left hand, the unread portion still rolled in his right hand, with three or four inches open in between. The reason for the narrow column was just manual convenience to begin with; and it also suited the scribes, who could easily cast up the letters or syllables, to compute their charge for copying.

When a different style was adopted, of flat leaves folded once into two pages, the old style of narrow column writing was transferred to these pages, though they were broader. This resulted in two or three or even four columns on the page, as may be seen in many early copies of the gospels. In the Middle Ages, the copyists of the West settled down to two columns; and there are beautiful copies of the whole Bible in a hand so minute and legible that they are no more bulky than modern printed editions.

Printers imitated the format of the written copies, and Bibles in double columns were usual. It was natural to adopt double column for other religious works, and thus hymns had to be got into narrow

width. This is awkward for many Latin hymns, such as the hymn to Bridget:

Christus, in nostra insula quae vocatur Hibernia.

But at least the English metre of fourteen syllables did have a regular pause after the eighth: this suited the printer well, and he turned every line at the pause, so converting the real lines, each of which rhymed—

O Lord, thou God of Israel, to Thee I make my mone;
In my distress and misery, I praye Thee helpe me sone.

—into half-lines of which only the alternate halves rhyme:

For why, my hart is so oppreste
With sorowe and wyth payne,
So that except Thou helpe me nowe
I shall not long remayn.

And thus the habits of Egyptian copyists two thousand years ago have not only caused our Bibles to be printed in a fashion unlike any ordinary book, but have caused our English metre to assume a form to the eye which was discordant with its form to the ear. For a long time opinion wavered as to which was the standard, four lines of fourteen syllables, printed as 86.86.86.86, or four lines, 8.6.8.6: each has been called common metre. A curious illustration of this wavering nomenclature is in the pages of Walter Scott, himself a collector of old poetry. In his *Old Mortality*, telling of the Covenanters singing at Drumclog, on the same page he calls eight such half-lines 'the two first verses', or 'a stanza'; and calls the next eight half-lines 'the second verse'.

However characteristic this metre had become, there were survivals or revivals of the antique Anglo-Saxon measure. A little sixteenth-century girl who

lived in a nunnery, and so was familiar with sol-fa, plain-song, and its notation, had a pet bird which died: she was cheered in her sorrow by Thomas Skelton, who wrote a dirge for it:

Pla ce bo
 Who is there who?
 Di le xi
 Dame Margery.
 Fa re my my
 Wherefore and why why?
 For the soul of Phillip Sparrow,
 That was late slain at Carowe.

. . .

The robin redbreast
 He shall be priest

. . .

The mavis with her whistle
 Shall read there the epistle,
 But with a large and long
 To keep just plain song.¹

The priest with his slow plain-song, entailing a long note of four semi-breves, and even a large note of eight semi-breves, certainly did need a dirge. The common man was being prompted from abroad to bring his part-song and his ballad measure as his own offering.

¹ *English Literature for Boys and Girls*, p. 211.

CHAPTER IV

THE INFLUENCE OF THE ANABAPTISTS; OF LUTHER; AND OF CALVIN

God doth bless this realme for the receyving of straungers
being persecuted for the Gospell, although some do repine
therat.

If *England* will take heede,
as cause ther is indeede,
Then let them look about,
and wede abuses out.
For if they renge, the state will change
from weal to wo, no doubt.

Thou shalt not be the worse,
o *england*, if thou nourse
Theise exiles comn of late
(what so theise *papistes* prate?)
Who, to retaine their *christ*, are faine
to choose this banisht state.

And eke if thou repent
thy synne and tyme mispent,
And lyve as god doth will
in his apointed still,
Then god, in love, that raignes above
shall thee defend from ill.

Ballad of 1570.

CHAPTER IV

THE INFLUENCE OF THE ANABAPTISTS; OF LUTHER; AND OF CALVIN

It is seldom recognized how the Anabaptists pioneered in hymn singing. In one sense they represent the old evangelical medieval tradition, which we noted among the Flagellants and the Hussites. But they revived the early Christian tradition in that many of their hymns celebrate their martyrs. Their great *Book of Martyrs* abounds in references to their hymns, in every district: Leeuwarden, Rotterdam, Middelburg, Overdam, Veere, Ghent, Antwerp, Lier, Nymwegen, Westphalia, Aachen, Cologne, up the Rhine, Bavaria, Salzburg, Vienna. We hear of psalms, of new hymns composed in prison, of hymns sung on the way to the stake, of men having to be gagged to prevent them singing, of a count who fancied himself insulted in a hymn of Thomas, of another noble who jeered at an Anabaptist corpse and demanded that it should sing him a hymn now. The Mennonite literature includes many hymn-books, and a few modern versions in Underhill's translation may illustrate.¹ A Beguin sister at Leeuwarden, Elizabeth by name, who was tortured and drowned in 1549, wrote a long hymn describing her cloister life; the refrain was:

In thanks to God will I delight,
And love and praise with all my might,
Honour and fear Him, day and night.

¹ E. B. Underhill, *A Martyrology, etc.*, I, 298, 374, 423, 428, 429; II, 4, 94, 201.

Jeronimus Segerson, imprisoned at Antwerp two years later, began a letter to his wife with the quatrain:

In lonesome cell, guarded and strong, I lie
Bound by Christ's love, His truth to testify.
Though walls be thick, the door no hand uncloses,
God is my strength, my solace, and repose.

A letter to a fellow-prisoner tells him that he is cheered by his singing aloud. His wife sang to her visitors, and when monks came to debate with her, sang to them. On her last night before she was drowned, she came to the window and sang to the people in the street the hymn:

Behold, what poor sheep are we.

When Adrian Cornelison was imprisoned at Leyden, he at once struck up the hymn:

O truth, how art thou now despised;

and soon composed a new one. When Gerrit Hasepoot was fastened to the stake, he sang right through the hymn:

Farewell, ye saints, farewell,
What if I meet this end?
Ere long the Lord shall come,
Our only leader, friend.
Joyous I wait the glorious day
To walk with you in white array.

Jaques d'Auchy was betrayed at Leeuwarden by a false friend; Jaques wrote a hymn describing the whole incident, and the whole city took it up, singing it outside the traitor's house till he fled:

'I have found thee,' the traitor said,
'Now from mine oath I'm free;
Cheerful in easy bonds be led,
Go to the court with me.'

Is truth or right or justice done,
 In sight of God and men?
 Will not the day most surely come
 To judge this deed again?

Of the South German and Swiss Anabaptists, there were many singers. Nearly every one martyred in 1527-9 was a songster. While many used familiar metres, Schlaffer was more free. Hetzer of Zürich and Constanz was most prolific. One of his may be illustrated, in modernized spelling:

Merk auf, O Welt, mit deiner Pracht
 Kehre ab von deinem Leben,
 Bedenke den Tod und Gottes Macht,
 Schau, was er dir will geben.
 Thust du die Huss
 Folgst Christus Fuss
 Er wird dich nicht verdammen;
 Das ewig Reich
 Wirst haben gleich
 Mit Jesu Christo: Amen.

These hymns were gathered into the *Ausbund* in 1571, and have been repeatedly republished. A large number of these southern Anabaptists migrated to America, where twelve more editions have been published, all in German. To the present day they sing their ancient hymns to the original tunes handed on by ear, for they have never been noted down. They are distinctly the oldest of Reformation hymns and tunes, undiluted by more modern strains.¹

Now these Anabaptists fled from the cruelties of their rulers, and many found refuge in England, as the records of the ports testify; Henry VIII again and again put forth proclamations against them. They never won many English converts, but always

¹ See the *Mennonitisches Lexicon*, 1914-25.

remained pure aliens; yet their habits of congregational singing, their facility in writing verse, their hymn-books, must have been known to Englishmen and have prepared the way for a corresponding writing and singing of English hymns.

Perhaps through Joan Bocher, their influence reached Anne Askewe, who was repeatedly in trouble as a heretic. When she was in Newgate Prison, she wrote a hymn. From its seven stanzas, one will illustrate at once its kinship to the Dutch hymns, and also a certain novelty in metre:

I now rejoice in harte, and hope bides me do so;

For Christ will take my part, and ease me of my wo.

Thou sayst, Lord, Whoso knocke, to them wilt Thou attende:

Undo, therefore, the locke, and Thy stronge power sende.¹

Robert Southwell, exactly fifty years later, another prisoner for religion, but now as a Roman Catholic, showed a vein of true poetry:

As I in hoary winter's night stood shivering in the snow,

Surprised I was with sudden heat which made my heart to glow:

And lifting up a fearful eye to view what fire was near,

A pretty Babe all burning bright did in the air appear.

But in neither case were these verses intended for congregational song, and it is not clear that they were ever adapted to that end. The immediate impulse in England came through other continental channels.

The first direct influence was that of Luther. As a lad he had earned his bread by singing in the streets; as an undergraduate he was so skilful on the lute that his fellow-students dubbed him the musician. After

¹ Inglis, *Gleanings from the English Poets*, p. 32.

his experiences as a friar, as a university professor, as a reformer, he became acquainted through Paul Speratus with the Hussite hymns and tunes. He at once saw their value for propaganda work, used them, and set to work to get hymns written, and to collect or invent good tunes.

His earliest essay in German verse links him curiously with the Anabaptists, through martyrdom. Two young Augustinian friars of Antwerp were burned in 1523. This fate of two of his own order caused him to write 'A new song of the two martyrs for Christ, burnt at Brussels by the sophists of Louvain'. Like the Anabaptist martyr ballads, it became very popular at the time, but dropped out of use. When D'Aubigné's *History of the Reformation* was published at Philadelphia in 1843, a paraphrase of part of this ballad was appended, and that same year was included in the American Baptist *Psalmist* as

Flung to the heedless winds.

Other translations soon appeared, but only the first is in American hymnals.

The original appeared in 1524 in a little handbook which contains twenty-five German hymns, of which Luther himself wrote eighteen. For half a century new hymns and hymn-books were in constant demand, and Luther showed the way to many sources: psalms and other scriptures, old Latin hymns, the Latin service books, old German verse, and passing events. He found a Latin hymn ascribed to John Huss, which he 'improved' and translated as *Jesus Christus unser Heiland*, whence it passed into English Moravian hymn-books of the eighteenth century.

From the Latin hymns he translated six; Coelius

Sedulius had written a Christmas hymn which had been cut into two for church purposes; Luther rendered the first in 1524, the second in 1541; through the Moravians an English version was made current, and newer versions of 1854 give us the two hymns

Now praise we Christ the Holy One;

Why, Herod, unrelenting foe!

By the seventh century an antiphon had taken shape from Kings, Chronicles, and a psalm, which had been translated into English by 1410. Luther translated the Latin into German, and versified it by 1529, when it passed into use after sermons. But it never came into use as an English hymn, having been adopted for the evening service of prayer, in prose. Another ancient hymn, *Media vita in morte sumus*, used during Lent, had become popular with an army about to fight, and had been rendered into German. Luther revised it, wrote two more verses, and published in 1524 as *Mitten wir in Leben sind*. It quickly attained new popularity as a hymn of triumph over the grave, death, and hell, so that Coverdale made an English version in 1539, 'In the myddest of our lyvynges'.

Another of Luther's hymns was revised from an old German litany, *Gott der Vater uns bei*, and this also was translated into English by Coverdale, 'God the Father, dwell us by'; again a dozen translations have appeared, beginning in 1721 with Jacobi, keeper of the royal German chapel at St. James's, instituted for Queen Anne's consort, Prince George of Denmark. The same translator gave also a second version of Luther's most famous hymn, *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*, written when the German princes at Speyer made

their famous protest against attempted coercion, and so gave rise to the name Protestant; it had of course been rendered by Coverdale, and has found threescore translators since, Carlyle beginning the modern series with his

A safe stronghold our God is still.

Luther prefixed a reference to Psalm 46, but it is not a version, though he did versify half a dozen psalms. The Lord's Prayer again inspired a hymn which was rendered soon into English, passing into the English psalter of 1562, and the Scottish by 1595. The *Nunc dimittis* prompted another hymn, which was rendered into the *Gude and Godly Ballates* by 1568 as 'Lord, let thy servant now depart', and has been often translated since 1838. Besides other hymns based on scripture, Luther wrote much that was original; and he quite realized the power of teaching definite doctrine in verse, as is evinced by his baptismal hymn, *Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam*, which speedily passed into the *Gude and Godly Ballates*, and was retranslated by the Moravians. Precisely because it sets forth Luther's doctrine, it has never become popular in English circles, though the Lutherans of Ohio have adopted a literary version by a Cheshire rector.

One of Luther's collaborators was Johann Walther, who was in the orchestra of the Elector of Saxony. He wrote a few hymns, notably 'A beautiful spiritual and Christian new miner's song of the last day and eternal life', parts of which have been versified in English, as in *Laudes Domini* at New York, 1854. But Walther was a musician, and Luther induced him not only to adapt the traditional church music for German services, but to note down fresh melodies that Luther improvised on the flute, for the gospels

and epistles. More important are his services to congregational singing, and in the very first hymn-book, that of 1524, there were five tunes, not melody alone but harmonized for five parts. This was an innovation, for Luther in his *Encomium on Music* speaks of one voice singing aloud a proper tune, beside which three, four, or five other voices likewise played round about, as it were with shouting.¹ The straightforward four-part chorale established itself by degrees, the melody being transferred to the treble before the century ran out. The hymn-book would never have made its way but for the pains Luther bestowed on finding appropriate popular music. This interaction of tune and verse is too often forgotten. The early book of 1524 had an ancient plain-song, harmonized, known in England as *Soldau*. Another of like origin has been reharmonized by Mendelssohn, and is in Allon's *Congregational Psalmist* as *Coburg*. Others of the later Middle Ages are *Dettingen* and *Augustine*, a plain-song of Abélard's, printed by Weisse in 1531. The famous hymn 'A sure stronghold' was set by 1530 to the tune so well named *Worms*. Luther himself wrote this, as also a tune often called after him. *Halle* dates from 1504. Luther adapted other old medieval melodies, such as *Antioch*. The Hussites appear to have been laid under contribution for *Bohemia*, which exceptionally ends in a key different from that signed to it. Luther would always stop when he heard a taking melody being sung in a village, and learn it. He laid all emphasis on vocal song, and while he did perform on instruments at home, he never commended the use of organs in congregational worship.

¹ Schaff-Herzog, *Religious Encyclopedia*, X, 159.

The early reformers in England naturally drank deep at Luther's well, and Miles Coverdale tried to introduce popular song into worship, domestic if not ecclesiastical. Coverdale first called attention to a possible religious use, entitling his translation of the Song of Solomon, *Salomons balettes called Cantica Canticorum*. Then he turned some of the German hymns into English rhyme, printing them with the German melodies, *Worms* and *Spire* included, in his *Goostly Psalms and Spirituall Songs*. His preface by no means states their origin, but does urge carters, ploughmen, women at their cradles and spinning-wheels, to use them rather than 'Hey nonny nonny', 'Hey trolly trolly', common ballads, or foul and corrupt ballads. But though the book was printed with the king's leave in 1531, it was expressly prohibited seven years later, and again in later injunctions of the king. And so this first attempt to introduce modern hymns for popular use, was balked by royal authority. In England the idea was still so strange that the word 'hymn' was used in the Greek sense of a festal ode. Thus Spenser wrote long 'Hymns' to Love, Beauty, Heavenly Love, Heavenly Beauty. Not always were such hymns intended to be sung, though when the singer was his own accompanist with the lute, he would probably be able to vamp to any peculiar grouping of syllables and lines. Only, in such cases, it is distinctly solo-singing that is contemplated. And so though Donne, Jonson, Quarles, Herbert, and others wrote on sacred themes, and may conceivably have sung their compositions in their own homes, there is nothing here intended for congregational song. Indeed, none could be so used to-day as originally written, though the verses of Quarles and Herbert have been freely edited

for the purpose. It is worth seeing what is the original of one of the best known:

THE ELIXER

Teach me, my God and King, In all things thee to see,
 And what I do in anything, To do it as for thee:
 Not rudely, as a beast, To runne into an action;
 But still to make thee prepossest, And give it his perfection.
 A man that looks on glasse, On it may stay his eye;
 Or if he pleaseth, through it passe, And then the heav'n espie.
 All may of thee partake: Nothing can be so mean,
 Which with his tincture (for thy sake) Will not grow bright and clean.
 A servant with this clause Makes drudgerie divine:
 Who sweeps a room, as for thy laws, Makes that and th' action fine,
 This is the famous stone That turneth all to gold:
 For that which God doth touch and own Cannot for lesse be told.

Herbert did not write hymns for his own congregation, though he could write in private praise of church music: even his *Antiphon* appears meant for reading, not really for public song, unless perhaps by a trained body in choirs and places where they sing:

Chorus. Let all the world in ev'ry corner sing
 MY GOD AND KING.

Verse. The heav'ns are not too high,
 His praise may thither flie;
 The earth is not too low,
 His praises there may grow,

Chorus. Let all the world in ev'ry corner sing
 MY GOD AND KING.

Verse. The church with psalms must shout,
 No doore can keep them out:
 But above all, the heart
 Must bear the longest part.

Chorus. Let all the world in ev'ry corner sing
 MY GOD AND KING.

This antiphon, however, testifies that something congregational had rooted itself: the people shouted psalms in church, despite an endeavour to stop it. And to this half-way step towards hymn-singing we must turn.

John Calvin, after his first stay in Geneva, went on to Strasburg, where he heard the German hymns, and was so struck with a splendid chorale that he brought back the tune when recalled to Geneva. Here he set himself to develop congregational song, but showed a strong objection to hymns of 'human composures'. In practice he rarely allowed anything but versions of the Hebrew psalms. These were translated into French metre, he himself versifying four or five in the Strasburg book of 1539. Finding that Marot's versions were very popular, he substituted these for his own, and on Marot's death, asked Beza to complete the book. After many editions, some finality was attained with a complete set in Paris in 1565. Thus while Germany preferred hymns, Calvin's influence was for the psalms only.

Another important development took place at Geneva, as to the music. Calvin invited Louis Bourgeois to edit the psalm-book, which at first had but three tunes.¹ He threw over the Gregorians, and adapted popular song-tunes, writing others in the same style, till there was a collection of more than eighty. Calvin feared that the four-part singing might detract from solemnity, and committed himself to the statement that songs of four parts cannot fail greatly to displease God; but though he had his way so far that many printed books gave only the melody, yet singing-schools were instituted, and four-part harmony became the practice. It was well established at Paris by 1555, and soon after was transplanted thence to Scotland. The work of Bourgeois was continued by Goudimel, whose edition of 1565 gave what proved to be the final form of the French words. An edition

¹ A. Mitchell Hunter, *The Teaching of Calvin*, p. 278.

two years later gave not only the staff-notation for the music, but also the sol-fa initials; but this system ceased to be reprinted at Geneva with 1597.

Goudimel introduced another important change. Hitherto the melody of every tune had been assigned to men; thus, of five versions of Luther's tune to *Ein feste Burg*, two gave the melody to the tenor, three to the bass. This was evidently a relic of the old choir services in monasteries. But now that whole congregations were singing, and sacred song was acclimatized in homes, women became at least as important. Goudimel met the altered circumstances by assigning the melody to the soprano.

Like most religious reformers, Calvin relied on song by the people, and discouraged musical instruments, which he compared to the childish toys which ought to be put away in manhood. So deeply did his teaching sink into the Genevans, that three years after his death they melted down the pipes of the organ in his church, to form flagons for the communion. And his principles were adopted widely in Britain.

In Scotland the influence of Luther was felt in the same way. David Lindsay began writing political verse in 1529, his *Complaynt* being in our long metre. Two years later, James V sent him, as Lyon King-of-Arms, on an embassy to the Emperor Charles V, so that he had close contact with the Lutheran movement. Of this there is a clear echo in his drama, *Ane Satyre of the Three Estaitis*:

My potent pardons ye may see,
Come frae the Cham of Tartary,
Weel sealed with oyster-shells:
Though ye have no discretion,
Ye shall have full remission,
With help of books and bells.¹

¹ R. Inglis, *Gleanings from the Poets*, p. 27.

This is a metre which has quite established itself in our hymnody. But if Lindsay became 'the poet of the Scottish Reformation', its hymn-writers were the Wedderburn brothers. James, with experience as a merchant in Normandy, returned and wrote dramas satirizing the Romanists; then Robert and John, chaplains, led him towards the ballad, and from Dundee there came forth popular appeals. When the realm became too hot for them, they fled to France and Wittenberg. And there they gathered up their broadsides, publishing by 1546 'Ane compendious Buik of godlie psalmes and spirituall sangs, collectit furth of sundrie parts of Scripture, with diveris uther Ballates changeit out of prophane sanges, etc.' This is a remarkable blend of paraphrases and carols from the German, of psalms on the Genevan model, and original ballads. The book was most popular in Scottish homes for at least eighty years; but it does not seem to have made its way into the worship of the kirk.

On the literary side, there was an English movement to correspond.¹ Christopher Tye, chorister of King's College, then gentleman of the Chapel Royal to Henry VIII, and organist at Ely, not only wrote in 1545 music for the new English canticles in cathedrals, but for congregations was versifying the Acts of the Apostles, and publishing with notes to sing, with lute accompaniment. The music is repeatedly republished, and still rendered by the Madrigal Society. It contains a full harmony of a new tune which at once became popular, and was called by Andro Hart, *Dundie*, but by Ravenscroft, *Windsor* or *Eaton*, 'as he was using the name *Dundee* for Hart's *French*'. Tye

¹ J. T. Lightwood, *Hymn Tunes and Their Story*, p. 39.

managed a new effect by rhymes at the middle of the long lines:

A certayne man who was namēd Ananias trulye,
With Sapphira hys wife framēd Unto the Lord a lye.
It chancēd in Iconium As they oft tymes dyd use
Together they into dyd cum The sinagogue of Jues.

And this has become the standard pattern for our common metre, though we now cut each verse in two, calling the ballad or Tudor stanza double common; whereas it is evident that what was really common then was the four-line of fourteen syllables, which we print as eight lines of 8.6.

While Tye was at work on the Acts, many others were at work on the Psalms.¹ The first version of all the Psalter, with the hymns from Luke, was published by Robert Crowley, an Oxford scholar and London printer. It is dated 20th September 1549, and shows many points of interest. The same regular ballad measure is adopted:

That man is happy and blessēd, that hath not gone astray:
In the counsell of wycked men, nor stode in synners' way.

Then a ditty that is printed with the same is based on an old church mode, assigned as usual to the tenor, but fitted with three other parts in harmony. A third point is of great interest, that the first nine syllables are all to the same chord, and in the second line the first five syllables return again to the same four notes. That is to say, we have here a double chant.

Just about the same time appeared nineteen psalms versified by Thomas Sternhold, groom of the robes to Edward; in 1549 he died, and a second edition gave

¹ Grove, *Dict. Mus.*, IV, 753; Hunter, *The Teaching of Calvin*, p. 281.

thirty-seven by him with a supplement of seven by J. Hopkins. No music was given with either, or with the third edition in 1553, to which Whittingham added seven more versions. Francis Seagar, the same year, put out nineteen psalms, with two original musical settings in four parts. But the accession of Mary that year brought an end to experiments in England.

By this time the nation was not simply musical, but it had brought its music into popular religious use. It struck even a compatriot of Calvin, Estienne Perlin, who wrote in his *Description d'Angleterre*, 1558, that all the English were joyous and loved music greatly, that there was no church so small but that the people sang there. Nor did the congregations depend entirely on printed books. When John à Lasco, pastor of the Strangers' Church in the old Austin Friars, took ship at Gravesend, his people bade him farewell by singing his favourite psalm, the second. This shows how these Frenchmen had learned the new metrical version; they needed no book. In the next century we have similar evidence of natives knowing the Psalms in English; both Cromwell's troopers at Dunbar, and conventiclers at Drumclog. How this familiarity came about, we can readily trace.

Many English took refuge from Mary Tudor at Geneva, and becoming thoroughly imbued with Calvin's views, in 1556 they issued *One and Fiftie Psalms of David in English Metre*, where Whittingham edited freely the work of Sternhold and Hopkins, adding seven new versions by himself; the title shows that they had come into contact with other metres and were thinking. They wedded to them as many melodies, some of which were destined to become famous as the 'Church Tunes', though they were

chiefly French and German, with a few perhaps by the refugees in the same style.

Under Elizabeth, experiments became possible again in England, with the concession by the ecclesiastical authorities in the Injunctions of 1559 that hymns might be sung by the congregation before or after Common Prayer. So the Sternhold-Hopkins Psalter of 1560 had a supplement of fifteen hymns, adapted to the round of church service, somewhat in the style of the old Latin hymns in the Catholic breviaries. Next year versions of twenty-five more psalms were added by William Kethe, then in Geneva; in his Hundredth Psalm the second verse began:

The Lord ye know is God in dede,
With out our aide, He did us make:
We are His folck, . . . ¹

This metre was apparently chosen to match the 1551 tune of Bourgeois for Psalm 134. With 1562 an edition gave versions of all the one hundred and fifty psalms, including four by a Scottish Dominican friar, who took the book to Holyrood.² The fifteen hymns were now put in front of the psalms, not after them. In later editions eight more hymns from German sources were appended, modern and experimental. Thus to what became the Allowed Psalter, usually bound up with the Prayer Book, there were not only paraphrases prefixed, but hymns affixed.

Foreign influence was to be seen in two things, the metre and the tunes, and both of these bear directly on our theme of hymns as distinct from psalms.

The earlier versions were all in English metre, the

¹ Respelt 'folke' in 1561, misspelt 'flock' in 1585.

² Hunter, *The Teaching of Calvin*, p. 28.

fourteen-syllable line; and in the final edition no fewer than one hundred and nine psalms were of this measure. But at Geneva others had been met, and adopted, so that forty-one of the later versions showed variety; English conservatism dubbed some of the more lively, 'Geneva jiggs'; a good specimen is that well known to us as 148th:

The Lord of heaven confess.

The old Latin measures which had dominated the clergy had scarcely any influence on the popular taste, which diversified the traditional folk-song with the livelier continental metres.

The music deserves more careful analysis through the four early editions of 1556, 1560, 1561, and the Aldersgate edition of 1564. They are all alike in printing the melodies to the psalms, or in giving references back to a previous melody, which may be used for this psalm as well; and they are all alike in having no harmony indicated. An edition of 1563 differed much in these respects, showing native influence again predominant; it therefore will be considered separately.

Whittingham's Genevan edition of 1556 had fifty-one tunes to the fifty-one psalms; of these twenty-six were never reprinted, and only fourteen held on to the fourth edition.¹ They form the nucleus of what long figured as the 'Church Tunes', and in a classified index of 1621 they are described as 'English tunes imitating the High Dutch, Italian, French, and Netherlandish tunes'.

The edition of 1560 provided new tunes for the fifteen liturgical hymns, apparently all by English

¹ Grove, *Dict. Mus.*, IV, 754.

composers, except that the Commandments were translated into long measure in order that the existing French tune might be taken over; it is still in use, appropriately named *Commandments*. Psalm 120 took over the French tune to 107; Psalms 121, 124, 130, took over the French tunes to the same psalms, of which Goudimel's air for the 124th was afterwards named, with recollection of the Huguenot sufferings in the galleys, *Toulon*. The third and sixty-eighth psalms had an air based on the French 134th, which led to better things.

The edition of 1561 not only had eighty-seven psalms, but it had sixty-three tunes, of which sixteen were new, and nine came from the French. The French 134th was now fitted, by repetition, as it was only half the length, to our 100th; and it struck root as the *Old Hundredth*. Psalms 50, 104, 145, 148, took over the corresponding French tunes; 113 took over 36 French, which was the one tune Calvin had brought from Strasburg in 1539, a twelve-line eights; 122 took over 3 French; 125 took over 21 French; 126 took over 90 French; 132 is of unknown origin, but is well known to us as *St. Flavian*.

It is not clear when Goudimel's 140 passed into English use; Allon called it *Ely*, and this tune must be discriminated from a modern tune of that name composed by Thomas Turton, bishop of that diocese, which leads off with the same phrase, and is in the same metre.

The edition of 1564 contained one hundred and five tunes, the melody being printed at the head of the psalm to which it was allotted, so that these became known as the 'proper tunes'; though each of the forty-five psalms without a tune had a note referring to that

tune which was suitable for it.¹ About half the tunes are minor, a sign of the infancy of congregational song. In this edition Psalm 34 had another Huguenot melody now known as *St. Michael*. A most interesting novelty was a translation by Robert Wisdome of a German hymn, running:

Preserve us Lord by thy dear word
 From Turk and Pope defend us Lord;
 Both which would thrust Out of his throne
 Our Lord Christ Jesus Thy dear Son.

This was set to a tune by Luther, which became as popular here as in its home; it was long known as *Pope and Turk*, but is now rechristened *Luther's Hymn*.

But a marked feature of this 1564 edition was the thirty-one new tunes by Englishmen. For with the accession of Elizabeth the proud Tudor feeling of English sufficiency regained power, and the influences from abroad came to a speedy end. We may, however, recognize three ideas which were now lodged in the national mind, destined to fructify in due time. [From the Anabaptists, English Separatists and Dissenters were destined to inherit the love of new original hymns, expressing their own feelings and their own interpretation of Bible truth. From the Lutherans was learned the possibility of utilizing the melodies of the people in the service of God. From Geneva came not only experiments in new metres, but the determination of the congregation at large to take a part in the public service of praise. For it must be remembered that the only singing contemplated by the official Book of Common Prayer, was by the chanter or minister leading the devotions, or by the trained choir which made response, and at one point was allowed to render an

¹ W. Cowan, *Scottish Reformation Psalmody*, p. 43.

anthem.) It is the popular revolt against this system which is our theme.

The development of musical instruments was remarkable. When an organ was built for Ely in 1407, it had simply twelve notes. As the century ran on, more notes were introduced, the size of the keys was reduced, and the compass of the instrument rose to four octaves. Then the same style of keyboard was applied to a stringed instrument, the spinet as it was styled on the Continent, but in England the virginals, since it was suitable for maidens to play at home. This was known from the time of Henry VII, and specimens of a century later yet survive, and Pepys implies that one London family in three owned an instrument in 1665, so many did he see crowded into the wherries saving goods from the Great Fire. While flute and recorder could give melody alone, keyed instruments could give harmony; and now that the keys were as small as our modern keys, it was possible to play music essentially the same as ours. Thus the progress of mechanical invention furthered the development of domestic part-song with instrumental accompaniment, and also of elaborate cathedral music. But popular feeling was educated to popular religious song, and church organs were resented more and more. Under Henry VIII elaborate music and organs were enumerated among the eighty-four 'faults and abuses of religion'; and his suppression of the monasteries dispersed hundreds of communities of singers, destroyed hundreds of organs.

Congregational singing was much promoted by the use of printed books. And the influence of printers, inventing and standardizing notation, deserves attention. In England they popularized three things:

the five-line stave, sol-fa notation, the bar. As early as 1495, Wynken de Worde set up with metal type a stave of eight lines with notes; all printed with letterpress by one impression. Four lines were still used for cathedral song, six lines for organ and virginals. After some experimentation, Elizabeth granted monopolies for music-printing, and one monopolist settled on the five-line stave, already somewhat usual for vocal music. Next, in 1578, John Daye issued, *Cum Privilegio Regiae Majestatis*, 'The whole Booke of Psalmes, collected into Englishe Metre . . . with apt Notes to sing them withall, Set forth and allowed to be song in all Churches, of all the people together before and after Morning and Evening prayer, etc.' Many points deserve attention here; that the fourteen-syllable is the regular English metre, and that the double column has obliged the printer to break each line into 8 and 6; that the melody is indicated for every hymn, canticle, and psalm; that there was a popular demand, granted at last by the queen, for congregational singing in church: but our immediate point is the notation. A page is given to explain that Daye was catering for those who used stave-notation and those who used sol-fa; he had planned and cast new type, giving a letter joined to every note, so that 'thou mayest the more easily by the viewing of these letters, come to the knowledge of perfect Solefayng. . . . The letters be these, V for Vt, R for Re, M for My, F for Fa, S for Sol, L for La'. As his double column gave barely two inches of stave, a sign like the mathematician's square root was placed at the end to warn that the sense ran on, till the melody was complete, and then came two vertical lines. It has been said that this sign was the origin of our bar, but Daye's use of it was

quite different. The bar came from Germany, where Agricola, cantor at Magdeburg, published in 1529 a full vocal score; to show all the parts he needed a ten-line stave; to keep the singers together he drew a vertical line down the stave. This device was copied by Morley in 1597; but it was unnecessary when only the melody was shown. Ravenscroft in 1621 used it for a rather different purpose; he placed a bar at the end of each fourteen notes, to show where the line of poetry ended. When Henry Lawes, in 1653, was publishing a three-part score, with the voices at different speeds, he placed a bar to show where each accent fell: and though in congregational singing all was sedate and regular, Lawes's notation soon became standard, and the modern bar had arrived.

CHAPTER V

POPULAR DEVELOPMENTS TILL 1644

Observe this *organ*: Marke but how it goes:
'Tis not the hand of him alone, that blowes
The unseene *Bellows*: nor the Hand that playes
Vpon th' apparent note-dividing *Kayes*,
That makes these wel-composed *Ayres* appeare
Before the high *Tribunall* of thine eare:
They both concurre: Ech acts his severall part:
Th' one gives it *Breath*; the other lends it Art.
Man is this organ: To whose every action
Heav'n gives a *Breath* (a *Breath* without *Coaction*)
Without which *Blast* we cannot act at all;
Without which *Breath*, the *Vniverse* must fall
To the first *Nothing* it was made of; seeing
In *Him* we live, we move, we have our *Being*:
Thus filled with his Diviner *Breath*, and back't
With his first *powre* we touch the *Kayes* and act:
He blowes the *Bellows*: As we thrive in skill,
Our *Actions* prove like Musicke, *Good* or *Ill*.

QUARLES.

CHAPTER V

POPULAR DEVELOPMENTS TILL 1644

QUEEN ELIZABETH was musical, and in the splendid outburst of energy that marked her reign, poetry and song flourished greatly. The age which boasted of Raleigh, Spenser, Lyly, Sidney, Marlowe, Jonson, would be illustrious in itself, had Shakespeare never appeared. Yet the more we admire their talents, the more we wonder that none were dedicated to the cause of religion. We still sing the duet of Sidney, 'My true love hath my heart'; but we miss any allusion to David and Jonathan, and are tempted to wonder whether the enforced changes in outward worship repelled men from devotional song. It left them true at heart, as we know from such verses as Raleigh wrote in his Bible:

Even such is Time, that takes in trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with earth and dust;
Who in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days;
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
My God shall raise me up, I trust.

Yet we might almost guess that Shakespeare recoiled from the innovations in religion, and it is obvious that none of these giants did anything to enrich Christian hymnody.

Elizabeth, however, did maintain a fine choir for

her Chapel Royal, and at many cathedrals the tradition of anthems and musical services was maintained.¹ John Merbecke of Windsor had already published his *Boke of Common Prayer Noted*, showing the melody for chanter and responses; and nearly to the end of her reign he was 'singing merrily and playing on the organs', while cathedral after cathedral adopted his music. The Litany set to harmony 'according to the notes used in the Kynge's Chappell' had been published as early as 1544. Now the royal choir included such musicians as Thomas Tallys, Christopher Tye, Richard Farrant, Thomas Causton, and others who enriched the liturgical side of worship.

From this we turn to the popular side, and it is interesting to read how Elizabeth spent a Sunday at Kenilworth away from cathedrals. 'The forenoon occupied, as for the Sabbath day, in quiet and vacation from work, and in divine service and preaching at the parish church. The afternoon in excellent music of sundry sweet instruments and in dancing of lords and ladies.' There is no suggestion of instruments in the worship, and yet the narrator was distinctly musical. 'Sometimes I foot it with dancing, now with my gittern, and else with cittern, then at the virginals—ye know nothing comes amiss to me—then carol I up a song withal, that by and bye they come flocking about me like bees to honey.'² It is remarkable that the line was still drawn; harmonized singing of psalms within the church, solo or unison singing of carols outside.

The same distinction seems to have obtained north of the Tweed. Mary Stuart was serenaded in 1561

¹ John S. Bumpus, *English Cathedral Music*, p. 4.

² *England under the Tudors*, pp. 79, 81.

by citizens singing psalms outside Holyrood.¹ When her grandson Prince Henry was baptized at Stirling, a psalm was sung at the service; but at the banquet afterwards there was a harmonized psalm, accompanied with musical instruments.

The Earl of Murray ordered, and the vicar of St. Andrews carried through, the setting of the Psalms in four-part harmony by the best musicians in Scotland.² The instructions were precise, that intricate work was not to be introduced, but harmonies simple enough for the congregation. And Melville testifies that when he was a student at the college, he learned the gamut, plain-song, and the trebles of the Psalms. It is the progress of harmony that we follow at present.

John Day was a hearty adherent of the Reformation, and under Edward had obtained a licence to print the works of Ponet and Becon. He turned his attention under Elizabeth to the printing of music, and with the aid of English musicians he issued in 1560 'Certain notes set forth in foure and three parts to be sung at the Morning, Communion, and Evening Prayer.' While this was for ecclesiastical use, the introduction of harmony is to be noted. Two years later, Grindal authorized some Christmas carols, and these were followed up by doctrinal hymns, carols exhorting men to put their trust in Christ alone. Meantime Day published a tune-book for 'The whole psalms in foure partes, which may be song to al musicall instrumentes, set forth for the increase of vertue, and abolishyng of other vayne and triflyng ballades'. This was not a combined psalm-and-tune book, but a tune-book with

¹ W. Cowan, *Scottish Reformation Psalmody*, p. 45.

² *Ibid.*, p. 42.

one verse of a psalm to each tune. The Genevan editors had provided sixty-five melodies; these were now harmonized by W. Parsons and four others, who occasionally contributed different settings of the same, Parsons treating *Old 137th* to three sets of harmonies; so that there were now a hundred and eleven tunes provided from the old stock. And in addition they wrote thirty entirely new four-part tunes. At the end of this great collection were a few miscellaneous pieces, in both verse and prose, to which Tallys contributed a couple. These seem to foreshadow hymns and anthems for the congregation, as distinct from the professional choir.

Next Archbishop Parker commissioned Day to print a complete version of the Psalms by himself, copyrighted for ten years, and supplied with music in parts. 'The tenor of these partes be for the people when they will synge alone; the other parts, put for greater queers, or such as will syng or play them privatlye.' The volume was apparently intended as part of the official provision for church worship. Thomas Tallys of the royal chapel took the eight church modes and wrote fine new tunes with original harmonies, together with a ninth in mode XIII set to the version of *Veni Creator*, used in the ordination service; this we therefore call *Tallis's Ordinal*. One of the others was a canon in which the tenor led, and the soprano began four syllables later; we reverse the order, and call it *Tallis's Canon*. Tallys was fond of this device, and an earlier specimen shows how he and the monks used to enliven their odd hours. They wrote *The Black Sanctus or Monks' Hymn to Saint Satan*; he set it to a canon in three parts, and King Henry was wont in pleasant mood to take a part. When Tallys died in 1585, a

brass was set up in Greenwich Parish Church which commented dryly on his remarkable conformity:

He served long tyme in chappel with grete prayse,
Fower sovereignes reygnes (a thing not often seen),
I mean Kyng Henry and Prynce Edward's dayes,
Quene Mary, and Elizabeth our Quene.

For some reason, Parker never published his book; perhaps he distrusted congregational song. Whatever the cause, the excellent music of Tallys scarcely became known, and the way was left open for others to complete the Psalter in the style of Sternhold, to the loss of poetry.

It soon became evident that the words of Sternhold as completed by 1562 were to form the standard Psalter. And the sixty-five tunes bade fair to obtain an equally exceptional position. This came about by the conduct of William Damon, one of the queen's musicians. On his visits to John Bull, a goldsmith in the City, he harmonized simply all but two of these tunes, besides giving his friend fourteen new ones, including four in only half-length, like the Huguenot melodies. He seems to have doubted their reception, and allowed Bull to copyright them in 1579. On the whole, Damon's settings did not win favour, except that his new half-tunes established themselves rapidly; they were afterwards named *Cambridge*, *Canterbury*, *Southwell*, *Oxford*. He therefore tried again, dropping ten more tunes, and only adding one, reharmonized from Tye's *Acts*. He set them in both styles, melody for the tenor, melody for the treble.

Meantimes William Hunnis, another of the gentlemen of the Chapel Royal, was at work with both music and poetry.¹ He composed seven new tunes in the

¹ J. T. Lightwood, *Hymn Tunes and their Story*, p. 42.

full ballad measure, four lines of fourteen syllables, and to a 1583 edition of the seven Penitential Psalms in that measure, he annexed 'his handful of honi-suckles', being several original hymns, some of them in the new half-measure. These also turn to new account two familiar devices. Some are prayers, and to them he adds the response, Amen. Others were perhaps meant for his choir of the boys in the Chapel Royal to sing; and so he provides for the congregation a 'burden' of the old ballad type, only with a meaning of its own:

So shall my soul rejoice, rejoice,
And still for mercy cry
Peccavi, Peccavi,
Miserere mei.

Hunnis was both poet and musician. His book has several new tunes, and they are designed for congregational use, as we may see by another feature. The early versions of the Psalms are in very rude verse: to our ears they do not scan properly. Therefore when singing them to music, strict time was impossible; there had to be constant give and take, such as was usual in ballads, and is esteemed by some literary men the glory of English verse, when used in moderation.

Hunnis brought to his work that training in poetry and music that is to be expected from a gentleman in the royal chapel: and the result is that his tunes are nearly the first that have regular accent, or in our modern notation could have bars drawn. Yet none of his work is in use to-day, and the same is true of his older contemporary John Mardley, whose hymn of 1562 is in Roundell Palmer's *Book of Praise*, as modernized by Reginald Heber.

A true poet should also be mentioned, Thomas

Campion, who about 1610 published 'Two Bookes of Ayres', the first containing 'divine and morall songs to be sung to the lute and viols, in two, three, and four parts; or by one voyce to an instrument'. Among these was a version of a psalm, 'By Babylon's streams', the tune to which was published by Allon in 1858 with the title *Babylon*.

Richard Farrant, another of the queen's musicians, is known chiefly by anthems and services; a tune which bears his name is adapted by a modern editor from one of his anthems.

Thomas East, or Este (perhaps of Huguenot descent, like Vautrollier), had meantime engaged ten leading composers of madrigals to set the familiar *Church Tunes*. He added 'other short tunes usually song in London', including three by Damon appropriated without acknowledgment, and five new single common metre. One of these was a setting of Tye's old tune by Kirby, which still holds its own as *Winchester Old*, though the name was not yet bestowed. Names now appear for the first time, all geographical, *Glassenburie*, *Kentish*, *Cheshshire*. And some composers put their names, perhaps knowing Este's sharp practices.

One of the contributors to this edition of Este was Richard Allison, who issued another Psalter in 1599, where all the harmonies were his own, 'arranged for flute, orpharyon, citterne, or base violl, the singing part to be either tenor or treble; or for four voyces'. This is another sign that the old ecclesiastical custom of male-voice song to an organ was at least balanced by the domestic custom of family part-singing to stringed instruments, with or without keys. In our own day the victory of the women in capturing the melody is so complete that we should be surprised to see how as late

as 1787 Chetham's *Psalmody* still offered it to the tenor, and after fifty years the editor of the *Psalmist* had to claim it for the soprano; while at Dover, in New Hampshire, twenty years later, the female voices were ignored, and parts were printed for tenor and bass only.

It is to be regretted that the great musical and lyrical abilities of the Elizabethan age were rarely turned to popular religious account. Either the words were Latin, and the music for stately cathedral choirs, or they were secular and designed for family and social merry-making.

William Byrd, a pupil of Tallys, on the one hand wrote music to many Roman Catholic services, and on the other published twenty-nine madrigals in the 1588 *Psalms, Sonnets and Songs of Sadnes and Pietie, made into music of five parts, etc.* In this work he upheld a fine standard, saying that the better the music was, the sweeter it was to honour and serve God with. His admiring scholar, Thomas Morley, organist of St. Paul's, five years later began issuing books of canzonets, madrigals, ballets, consort lessons, and airs; both original and selected.¹

With the accession of James VI of Scotland, the two realms had more mutual influence; and as the creative period ended, the existing material was only edited afresh. Barley's edition proves that the editing could be very careless, so that six fine tunes by John Bennet, Giles Farnaby, and Thomas Morley are entombed here. Perhaps it was well that the Stationers' Company now acquired the copyright of Sternhold and of the Church Tunes.

Meanwhile a number of poets had been producing verses for chamber music, or, as usual, for mere reading.

¹ John S. Bumpus, *English Cathedral Music*, pp. 68, 71.

In many cases they were intensely individualistic, not intending their productions for common use: though such a personal note had not hindered many psalms and hymns being taken up by whole congregations. George Gascoigne deserves mention; not that he had been 'a common Rymer and a deviser of slaunderous Pasquelles', and that he reformed; not only that among his great output of drama and verse, he included in 1575 some posies; but that he prefixed 'Certayne Notes of Instruction concerning the making of verse or ryme in English'. This essay did for English poetry what Bede had done for Latin, and some flowers have been culled from the posy into modern hymnals. Ben Jonson's hymn to the Holy Trinity was in a metre that was not too strange:

Among Thy saints elected to abide,
And with Thy angels plac'd, side by side,
But in Thy presence truly glorified,
Shall I there rest.

The old Latin hymns occasionally prompted some authors. Thomas Browne, of whom it is told that his father used to open his breast when he was asleep and kiss it in prayers over him, that the Holy Spirit might take possession there, fulfilled his father's hopes. After study at Oxford, Montpellier, Padua, he settled about 1635 near Halifax, and slowly composed his *Religio Medici*. Towards the end he recorded his evening hymn of thirty lines, from which some sixteen have been edited into modern use, omitting such lines as:

Let no dreams my head infest,
But such as Jacob's temples blest.
While I do rest, my soul advance,
Make my sleep a holy trance,

That I may, my rest being wrought,
 Awake into some holy thought;
 And with as active vigour run
 My course as doth the nimble sun.

But the paraphrase by Bishop Ken, forty years later, was both intended for general use, and established itself first at Winchester school, then more widely.

Another old Latin hymn was translated by F. B. P. some twenty years earlier, and published in Scotland by David Dickson; and extracts are now in general use:

Jerusalem, my happy home.

But just at the same time Andro Hart struck out a new line in psalmody. Hitherto a hundred and five psalms had had their proper tunes; he issued an edition prefixing twelve common tunes to which all psalms in the ballad metre might be sung, indifferently. Most of his tunes seem Scottish, and we still use *Abbaye*, *Dukes*, *Dunfermline*, *Martyrs*: from Geneva he borrowed *French*, which Ravenscroft afterwards re-christened *Dundee* (quite distinct from Hart's *Dundie*): *Stilt* was reset by John Milton senior, and is known to us as *York*.

Although the old versions of the Psalms were unmusical and uncouth, yet publishers found there was a better sale for them than for newer and more poetical renderings. Dignitaries like King James and Chancellor Bacon, poets like Wither, Fletcher, Drayton, musicians like Lawes and Hunnis, theologians like Henry Ainsworth and Joseph Hall, with others like Montgomery, Alleyn, Alexander, Sandys, Barton, issued new versions. But scarcely any of them ever displaced the older versions, though Milton's version of the 136th shows what a lad of fourteen could do.

¹ W. Cowan, *Scottish Reformation Psalmody*, p. 40.

This work of Milton's was contributed, with a ten-syllable paraphrase of Psalm 114, to a Psalter edited by Thomas Ravenscroft, another precocious genius, who had taken his Mus. Bac. at Cambridge when only fourteen, and who now in 1621 challenged the great collection of Day with a very pretentious volume. It contained thirty-eight settings from previous editions, others from various sources, and forty new tunes, mostly single common metre; one, however, survives to us in 10.11, and is named after him. The names given to these, such as *Bristol*, *Durham*, *Gloucester*, *St. David*, *Salisbury*, suggest that he had gathered them from cathedrals, and from certain districts of England, Wales, and Scotland, though he names also Germany, Italy, France, and the Netherlands. He had them arranged into four parts, and he adapted the bar to mark the close of each line of the hymn. The copyright of this was acquired by the Stationers, and they therefore successfully opposed the new Psalter of George Sandys set by Henry Lawes to music completely new in melody and in style. Lawes could write in the old style, as we may still see in *King's College*.

Similarly nothing resulted from the efforts of John Amner, organist of Ely, who in 1615 put forth *Sacred Hymns of 3, 4, 5, and 6 parts for voices and viols*. A second John Bull, from Somerset, was appointed the first professor of music at Gresham College with a special dispensation to lecture in English, but he achieved nothing. In 1617 he avowed himself Roman Catholic, and became organist at Antwerp. From that period date his *Flemish Chorale*, and his organ fantasias on *Vexilla Regis*.¹

¹ John S. Bumpus, *English Cathedral Music*, pp. 74, 97.

A few by-products of cathedral organists enriched congregational song. Orlando Gibbons of King's College and Westminster has given his name to one tune in sevens, and wrote also several tunes for George Wither's *Hymns and Songs of the Church*; one of these, a duet for a paraphrase of the song of the angels at Christ's birth, is well known as *Angel's Song*. His younger contemporary, Thomas Tomkins, when organist of the Chapel Royal in 1622, published a collection of songs, including madrigals both sacred and secular; but they were for domestic use. He had greatly aided at Worcester the musical services in the cathedral, and besides setting the liturgy many times, he enriched congregational singing in the nave on Sunday afternoons, when the metrical psalms were sung by great crowds, second only to those at St. Paul's. For these he wrote original tunes, of which *Worcester* has recently been revived; and he reset *Dunfermline*, *Martyrs*, *St. David*, *Windsor*, *York*. Some of these appeared in Ravenscroft's *Psalter* of 1621, most only in his posthumous *Musica Deo Sacra* of 1668.¹

While, however, elaborate editions were available, the ordinary editions gave only the first few notes of the melody. It often happened, as it does now, that people who fancied themselves musical extemporized their own harmonies; and it also happened that different editors harmonized the same melody differently. As the effect was (and is) very painful, Edward Miller in 1635 published at Edinburgh a popular edition in which full harmony was printed for every common tune and also for every proper tune.

¹ Ivor Atkins, *The Early Occupants of the Office of Organist at Worcester*, pp. 57, 71.

Unhappily it had not time to establish itself as standard, but it did set a fine example of what was needed for good congregational singing, which was much preferred to the professional performances in cathedrals.¹

In May 1644 Parliament ordered all organs to be removed from churches and chapels, and the new Directory for Worship enjoined the general singing of the metrical psalms. This objection to instrumental worship must not be confounded with any objection to instrumental music in the home: a list of musical instruments of most use in England as they were used in 1656 enumerates cornet, shalme, sackbut, flutes, recorders, bagpipes, harp, lute, theorbo, viol, violin, virginals, harpsicalls, orpharion, psittern, gittern, apoprey. England was musical, but religious enough to decide that its vocal worship should not be swamped by orchestra or machine.

While we see the development of psalmody towards hymnody in the Reformation period, we must remember one great factor, always present, generally ignored from the ecclesiastical side. England had her ballads, her ballad-music, rough poetry of and for the multitude, to music simple enough to be picked up in a few minutes by the unlearned. Rhyme and melody were rarely printed, but were passed on by constant song, sometimes by one, sometimes by many. The professional student of poetry and of music is generally silent about these popular ballads. It is largely the antiquarian who searches out, takes them down from the lips of old women, and produces a *Border Minstrelsy* and *English Folk-Song Book*. They may suggest the catchy words and music written last century for music-halls, which, if they won popular favour, might even

¹ W. Cowan, *Scottish Reformation Psalmody*, p. 43.

be printed roughly. But these rarely lasted a year, and thus dated themselves; few found their way into any book of poetry, any more than the lyrics of musical comedy. They were copyright, did not spring spontaneously from the populace, seldom dealt with anything of permanent interest; they differed deeply from the old ballads.

A few of these were printed as broadsides, and occasionally a little collection would be written out. Two such, belonging to the middle of Elizabeth's reign and the middle of James's, have been edited for modern readers, who may thus read scores of ballads, of which some were political and miscellaneous, while thrice as many were religious, dealing with martyrs for both faith, and even the inner life of the soul.¹

From the point of form, it may be noted that a third of all were in the common metre, four lines of fourteen syllables, so popular that Shakespeare had made Bottom sing in it, and Chapman had adopted it for his version of the Iliad; almost another third in the long, four lines of sixteen. Half a dozen were in the fine swinging metre of 11.10 anapaest:

God graunte them acknowledge the truth as it is,
As well toward God, the Queene, and the Realme,
That due prayse and glory all only may be his
Who to save them and vs suffered death most extreame.

Thirteen other metres are represented, with many varieties of rhyme.

This collection of ballads preserves also the names of older tunes to which the ballads were adapted. Most of them seem traditional and of uncertain age. Of the common metre we find *Diana and her darlings dear*, *The Merchant*, *A man in desperation*, though the latter

¹ Hyder E. Rollins, *Old English Ballads*, p. 68.

would suggest a line of thirteen syllables, like *Awake, awake, O England. Hobby Noble and John a Side*, 'one of the best ballads in the world', was a seven-liner of eight syllables. *Lusty gallant* was a two-liner of fifteen, *Aim not too high* a four-liner of ten. *A rich merchant man*, and *John come kiss me now*, were others in popular use, while *Dainty, come thou to me*, a four-liner of twelve syllables, was evidently most current.¹ Two new tunes can be traced to this time. One called *Wilson's New Tune* sprang into favour with 1586; it may perhaps be assigned to the minstrel whose son was christened at St. Giles's the year before. The death in 1556 of John Careless, a Coventry weaver, popularized his ballad, which Coverdale printed in 1564, and a tune known as *John Careless* was utilized for many godly ballads. The original was intensely personal:

Indeed, sometymes I doe repent and pardon doe obtayne;
But yet, alas! incontinent I fall to synne againe.²

But the tune was used for a savage account of a Unitarian's death:

And do not as this Devill did, though shape of man he bare;
Denying Christ, did silence keepe at death, devoyde of care.

An attempt was made towards the end of Elizabeth's reign to bring together the two styles of music, the ecclesiastical and the popular. In 1595 Barnabe Barnes published a *Divine Centurie of Spiritual Sonnets*, which was promptly depreciated by Thomas Nash: 'such another device it is as the godly ballet of *John Carelesse*, or the song of *Greene sleeves* moralized'.³ And Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Mrs. Ford a gibe at a curious custom.⁴ Two distinct melodies can

¹ Grove, *Dict. Mus.*, IV, 462.

² Hyder E. Rollins, *Old English Ballads*, pp. 49, 56.

³ Hyder E. Rollins, *Old English Ballads*, p. 47.

⁴ *Merry Wives*, II, i, 65.

be woven together, to different words, to produce some sort of harmony, as many operas attest to-day. But some bold musician wedded together the stately Genevan *Old Hundredth* with the English folk-song of *Greene sleeves*. Evidently popular taste disapproved this innovation, and the method was left to the Italians, who practised it freely till the ecclesiastical authorities sternly forbade. In England there does not seem to have been any attempt to introduce it into church, but manifestly the church use of psalms was balanced by the domestic singing of religious ballads, the precursors of popular hymns.

There was indeed one deliberate attempt to introduce hymns. George Wither, a miscellaneous poet, produced in 1622 some *Hymns and Songs of the Church*, already mentioned for their music. Even here there are many that are intensely personal; an average congregation is not in need of a *Hymn for a Widower*, nor even for his *Author's Hymn*, however beautiful the thought:

Therefore as Thy blessed psalmist,
When he saw his wars had end,
And his days were at their calmest,
Psalms and hymns of praises penn'd;
So my rest by Thee enjoy'd,
To Thy praise I have employ'd.

But apart from the intrinsic fitness of these hymns, he took a dangerous step and obtained from the king a patent that a copy was to be bound up with every copy of the *Metrical Psalms*. This greatly prejudiced the book, the Stationers' Company opposed the patent. He pleaded that the Psalms were not Christian and that definitely Christian sentiment ought to be sung in church. And his work was so far good that

the rising generation bought his book, and used it at home. But a lawsuit resulted in disallowing the forced sale, and no change was made in the church service. In 1641 Wither tried again with a new book, *Heleluiah*, which he dedicated this time to Parliament. He emphasized again his originality, and wrote for special classes or occasions. While he had variety of metre, he did not neglect the good old standard, as may be seen in a verse to be sung at sea:

Take Thou, O Lord, the reins in hand, assume our master's
room;

Vouchsafe Thou at our helm to stand, and pilot to become:
Trim Thou the sails, and let good speed accompany our haste:

Sound Thou the channels at our need, and anchor for us cast.

But Puritans would not accept hymns for church use even from one of their captains. So long as there was official regulation of church worship, anthems in the service, psalms before and after, maintained their monopoly.

Two other experiments deserve notice. The 1592 Separatist Church, which migrated to Amsterdam, had a scholar in Henry Ainsworth, who in 1612 published a metrical Psalter direct from the Hebrew, with notes: but it was hardly used outside that single company. Eight years later, a sister church took farewell of some of its members in the large house of the pastor at Leyden, where, says Edward Winslow, 'we refreshed ourselves, after our tears, with singing of Psalms, making joyful melody in our hearts as well as with the voice, there being many of the Congregation very expert in music'. But when the final parting took place on the boat at Delfshaven, there is no word of singing, as when à Lasco had embarked: perhaps the English could not sing without book. A few years

later, Winslow promoted a great emigration to Massachusetts Bay, and there in 1640 was published the *Bay Psalm Book*. Uncouth as it is, its importance for our theme is considerable: for the 1647 edition added a few spiritual songs, and Dunster, the editor of the third issue, much augmented the hymns. It is the parallel and simultaneous development of hymns, distinct from psalms, in England, which is now to receive attention.

CHAPTER VI

THE REVIVAL OF HYMNS, 1650-1703

While others Thee and their own Souls abuse,
Debase their Love, and prostitute their Muse:
O Thou to whom all Love and Praise belongs!
To Thee I give my Heart, to Thee my Songs.

Waters will rise as high as whence they flow;
So Minds that came from Heav'n, to Heaven should go;
With Holy Fervor to their Author move,
Who gave 'em Pow'r to think and Pow'r to Love.

JOSEPH STENNETT.

CHAPTER VI

THE REVIVAL OF HYMNS, 1650-1703

THE Civil War naturally freed men from many shackles, and notably in everything relating to public worship. There was an amusing competition between two new versifiers of the Psalter, to obtain a parliamentary monopoly. Both failed in England, which continued to put up with Sternhold and Hopkins as gradually modified. But in Scotland, the work of Francis Rous, English, M.P. for Truro, was taken as the basis for a revised Psalter which to some extent is still used by all Presbyterian churches. We may in passing compare two versions of the 136th Psalm, remembering Milton's contemporary rendering, with which the first challenges comparison, having a burden in alternate lines:

Give thanks to God, for good is He:
For mercy hath He ever.
Thanks to the God of gods give ye:
For His grace faileth never.

The second version is to the familiar metre of the 148th Psalm, where the rhymes deserve attention:

Praise God, for He is kind:
His mercy lasts for aye.
Give thanks with heart and mind
To God of gods alway:
For certainly
His mercies dure
Most firm and sure
Eternally.

But we attend rather to the revival of original hymns, the more radical reform. An interesting transition is due to William Habington, who as a good Roman Catholic took a text from the Vulgate, then paraphrased the opening thought of the psalm, and then developed the idea at length, with an apparent hit at Cromwell. Two verses will illustrate his metre:

When I survey the bright
 Celestial sphere,
 So rich with jewels hung, that Night
 Doth like an Ethiop bride appear,

My soul her wings doth spread,
 And heavenward flies,
 The Almighty's mysteries to read
 In the large volume of the skies.¹

The revival of the propagandist hymn is apparent in 1649, when a new world seemed opening, and as an earthly monarch had been displaced, the way appeared open for the Fifth Monarchy to be established. John Goodwin, Vavasour Powell, Thomas Lamb, Appletree, and others, composed hymns deliberately to embody their doctrines. These were given out from the pulpit, usually after the sermon which they summarized, and were sung two lines at a time. Some of them found their way into print, but they were essentially for singing, not for reading. This is a point that has not always been noticed, yet it gives the key to this new departure, the re-invention of the homiletical hymn. The Anglican liturgy did give the congregation a real part, a series of responsive prayers; now it was abolished, this group of preachers provided hymns to respond to the sermon. The novelty was quickly

¹ George Beaumont, *A Book of English Poetry*, p. 163.

taken up, especially by the preachers with novel doctrines; Feake, Powell, Anna Trapnel, even ventured into print to propagate their views outside their own congregations.

The possibilities of the new idea were seen by their opponents, and Jeremy Taylor, a sequestered incumbent, also put out hymns of a very different cast. It is remarkable to see how one of his, written in the midst of the Fifth Monarchy movement, catches up its imagery for quite other ends:

Lord! come away;
Why dost Thou stay? ¹

Canon Thomas Washbourne also found, in his straitened circumstances when his prebend was cancelled, a similar incentive to write. Other hymns came from Justice Hale, Wotton, Anne Collins, and Henry Vaughan, the doctor of Newton-by-Usk. One of his odes again shows how the Coming of the Bridegroom fascinated men of all types; but the poem best suited for song begins:

They are all gone into the world of light!
And I alone sit ling'ring here;
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear. ²

The measure of this, however, as well as its personal tone, militated against its congregational use.

Yet when after 1660 the Anglicans regained power, the only use they made of the opportunity to revise the liturgy musically, was to introduce a single version of an ancient hymn into the ordination service. Hymns seem to be more congenial to the persecuted and

¹ Roundell Palmer, *Book of Praise*, p. 191.

² George Beaumont, *A Book of English Poetry*, p. 208.

unpopular, who can express their feelings in original song.

So we find in 1663 a book of hymns by Katherine Sutton recommended by Hanserd Knollys. And it is noteworthy that this is associated with Holland, the home of the persecuted Mennonites. Next year a young tailor of Aylesbury, Benjamin Keach, issued a *Child's Instructor* with hymns; but the whole edition was seized and destroyed, and he was condemned to the pillory for writing it. Also in 1664, Samuel Crossman, ejected from Little Henny, followed suit; the two hymns quoted by Roundell Palmer testify to the great popularity of the 148th metre already exemplified, and of the burden. After he conformed in 1667 and became canon and dean, the vein of poetry seems to have been abandoned. Katherine Philips, however, entered the succession that year, and was followed in 1668 by John Austin, a Roman Catholic, four of whose hymns are in the *Book of Praise*.

That age of persecution and uniformity, however, hardly permitted hymn-singing to flourish. William Barton, M.A. had versified some of the Psalms by 1644, and had obtained the commendation of the House of Lords; Baillie admitted that his paraphrase was poetical, and was preferred by the London ministers, but intrigued against it. The happy result was that Barton turned his attention to hymns, and in April 1648 obtained leave from the Lords to annex his hymns to the psalms of his rival, Rous. In 1659 he published independently a hundred hymns, when he was incumbent of Martin's at Leicester, and followed at intervals with others, till in 1670 he gathered together and republished his *Centuries of Select Hymns*, with a recommendatory preface by

Baxter. There is no probability that they were ever used by public congregations.

Next year John Playford, clerk at the Temple, and for a quarter of a century the leading music-publisher, brought out an edition of *Psalms and Hymns*, where the two were intermixed, and hymns were not merely appended to the Psalms. Though he was somewhat in advance of his time, yet he found followers. He took over a tune popularized in Wales by Archdeacon Prys in 1621, which holds its own as *St. Mary*. That same year we find Broadmead Church ostentatiously and defiantly singing at worship in Bristol, claiming that the Conventicle Act did not forbid, and testing the point at law. With 1672 the persecution collapsed, and Vavasour Powell's collected hymns found a market. Next year Abraham Cheare's poems of ten years' composition appeared.

From Chear's writings it has been well pointed out that not only modern congregational hymns, but hymns for children, began with Baptists, and that this particular book is both sympathetic with the little ones, and evinces desire to lead them to Christ. The opening stanza on 'Remember now thy Creator' is worth quoting:

Sweet children, Wisdom you invites
 To hearken to her voice,
 She offers to you rare delights
 Most worthy of your choice.
 Eternal blessings in her wayes
 You shall be sure to find;
 Oh! therefore in your youthful dayes
 Your great Creator mind.

Keach rewrote his primer from memory, and issued edition after edition. Moreover, being now pastor

of an important London church, he introduced there regular singing of hymns after the Lord's Supper, then at Thanksgiving, and in 1676 published a hymn-book, no longer like Barton as a literary effort, but as a real provision of hymns to be sung in congregational worship. The example was quickly followed in Baptist circles.

The demand for better tunes was met in turn by Playford, who next year issued his *Whole Book of Psalms*, more in accordance with popular taste than his former edition.¹ Several tunes still in use are to be found here, some for the first time.

Hymns, like ballads, were often prompted by definite occasions. The Bristol Separatists, who in October 1678 lost their pastor, were invited on 5th November by Edward Terrill to sing a hymn inspired by the discovery of a new Popish plot. It was perhaps the first time that they wandered from the standard Psalms. Terrill adopted the familiar ballad measure, with enrichments of rhyme; two of its ten verses illustrate its grammar and free rhythm:

As Papist still, doe seeke to kill,
the Governours of our Land:
The Lord of might, doth bring to light,
the Plotts they take in hand.

Therefore lett we, give praise to he
that still doth show his love:
And lett us live, and allways give,
the glory to God above.

The movement towards hymns had nothing local; we have seen Aylesbury, Leicester, Plymouth, Bristol, London, spontaneously breaking into song. And the

¹ John S. Bumpus, *English Cathedral Music*, p. 193.

more the linnets were caged, the better did they sing. The best known of them was at Bedford, no longer able to ring the bells or follow the trumpet; but Bunyan quite agreed with Lovelace that stone walls did not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage. As early as 1664 he had published *Serious Meditations upon the Four Last Things* in verse; also *Ebal and Gerizim* and *Prison Meditations*. *Pilgrim's Progress* shows Christian and Hopeful beguiling the way with song. A side note, "A Christian can sing tho alone, when God doth give him the joy of his heart", shows that the custom was to sing together. From the second part, published 1684, the song of Mercy was often adopted in Baptist churches to sing at the welcome of a new member:

Let the Most Blessed be my guide.

These led up to his imitating Keach and Cheare, when in 1686 he put out *A Book for Boys and Girls, or Country Rhymes for Children, in Verse, on Seventy-four Things*. Also he seems to have written some 'scriptural poems', on Ruth, Samson, Christ, the Sermon on the Mount, Jonah, Joseph, and the Epistle of James; but these were only published in 1701, after his death. In his life-time his own church at Bedford did not sing at worship; only in 1690 was the singing of psalms introduced cautiously.

In London things moved more rapidly. Hercules Collins introduced hymn-singing at Wapping, and when in 1687 Devonshire Square Meeting was restored to the Baptists, they celebrated the occasion by singing on 1st March. So when in 1689 the Baptist Assemblies met, both of them were agitated over the novelty. The General Baptists recorded their opinion

that united singing, according to the sol-fa system, was of necessity artificial and could not possibly reflect the action of the spirit. The Particular Baptists, after some discussion, decided that no principle was at stake, and that each congregation must settle for itself. Thereupon Keach published yet another hymn-book, *Spiritual Melody*.

It is extremely necessary to say that, by ignorance of the course of events, Baptists have been depicted as the opponents of singing, whereas the fact is that they were the English pioneers of hymn-singing. At this time no other congregation can be shown which sang anything but psalms and paraphrases. Ainsworth started the Congregationalists with these at Amsterdam, though Canne in that same church forbade their use at funerals. In New England there was the *Bay Psalm Book*, but as late as 1739 Ebenezer Turell objected to ministers introducing hymns of human composition into great and mixed assemblies, or to their being sung on the streets and in ferry-boats, and to singing at home in the evenings.¹ Most Baptists had dropped the Psalms, and were lustily singing hymns long before that; if here and there silent congregations were still to be found, they were commented on with surprise as the exceptions—proving that the rule was the other way. No Pedobaptist congregation has yet been produced which adopted the singing of hymns before Keach showed the way. A few books indeed were published, as by Flatman (1674), Speed and Williams (1677), Vincent, Wadsworth, Mason, Reeve, Grenfield, Simson, Rawlet. But publishing is a mere individual landmark in literature; singing congregationally is quite another thing. And that Keach

¹ John Waddington, *Cong. Hist.*, III, 305.

fostered a fashion for this may be seen in that W. Rogers published in 1685/6 *A New and Easy Method to learn to sing by Book*.

Three Anglican authors of this period deserve notice. John Mason, rector of Water Stratford, was somewhat of a Fifth-Monarchy man. He published in 1683 a volume of *Spiritual Songs*, which ran to twenty editions, though it is not clear that the songs did actually pass into congregational use. Since the reprint in 1859 some are found in modern hymn-books, such as:

Thou wast, O God, and Thou wast blest.

Thomas Ken drew up a *Manual of Prayers* for Winchester scholars, incorporating the extremely long hymns he had written in 1674 for them at evening, at midnight, and at morning; from these, shortened morning and evening hymns have passed into general use now. John Patrick of the Charterhouse confined himself to the Psalms, but treated them far more freely than his predecessors. He frankly recognized the unchristian tone of many; so abridged, paraphrased, Christianized them, in a way that set a new model, to be followed a generation later by an illustrious Nonconformist.

Throughout the reign of William, the composition and singing of hymns made steady progress among Dissenters. Baxter's versatile genius was not limited to prose, and we still sing his

Lord, it belongs not to my care
Whether I die or live.

Another Presbyterian was Joseph Boyse of Dublin, who issued first *Sacramental Hymns* in 1693, then *Family Hymns* in 1701, which were promptly followed

next year by a corresponding volume by Matthew Henry. For the Independents, Davis of Rothwell published a volume, which in its second edition of 1694 contained a hundred and sixty-eight hymns. In 1696 the Irishman Nahum Tate included in his *Miscellanea Sacra* a version of the old Latin *Dies Irae* by the Earl of Roscommon; this has established itself in many circles. In the same year Tate collaborated with a compatriot, Nicholas Brady, in a new version of the Psalms, which might be an improvement on the antiquated Sternhold and Hopkins. They profited by the freedom which Patrick had used, and their paraphrase of Psalm 34 is therefore still on our lips:

Through all the changing scenes of life,
In trouble and in joy.

This led to a pitched battle in Baptist circles, which lasted for four years, as to the acceptability of hymns as distinct from psalms. The objections raised were over (1) the uninspired character of hymns—met by an appeal to the free paraphrasing of psalms; (2) the unreality of a whole congregation singing songs of experience, which could hardly be their own—met by an appeal to the practice of singing experimental psalms, to the liberty to remain silent, and the fact that Baptists did not invite outsiders to their worship. Elias Keach seconded his father in supporting hymns, while Stennett recalled that at and after the supper in the upper room, the Lord and the disciples sang together; he therefore published in 1697 a volume of hymns for the Lord's Supper, and followed it with another for baptisms. His versification of Solomon's Song led to his being asked to revise the metrical

psalms of the Church of England, with the approval of the Archbishop of York; but the work was never completed. Many other writers emerged, and in 1700 Keach issued a new edition of his hymn-book 'as now practic'd in several congregations'.¹

The popularity of ballads at this time is strikingly evinced in political affairs. Fletcher of Saltoun, indeed, cited a man who would challenge the maker of laws, if he might make the ballads of a nation: but the real point is, whether the ballad-maker catches the popular feeling. This was done happily by Thomas Wharton in his jingle about the Earl of Tyrconnel, with its refrain 'Lilliburllero bullen a la', written to an Irish nursery tune picked up by the soldiers for marching.

Music was all-important; but the mass of people wanted the old tunes, and did not respond to new airs; only trained choirs would learn these. Benjamin Rogers, organist at Magdalen College, Oxford, set a Eucharistic hymn by Nathaniel Ingelo, himself no mean performer; every May Day it is sung at the top of the college tower. Outside Court circles, where Charles patronized and Pepys appreciated, there was not much encouragement for composers. Henry Purcell left in manuscript songs, hymns, canons, hymn-tunes, chants; but complained that there was no demand for printed editions. While his magnificent anthems and church services kept his fame alive, yet in popular circles he was unknown till Novello's enterprise in 1828. Henry Playford, son of the great publisher John, issued in 1701 the *Divine Companion*, with many new tunes, often reprinted. John introduced a style of printing which has been universally

¹ H. Sweetser Burrage, *Baptist Hymn-writers*, p. 34.

followed, making the shapes of the notes round or oval instead of square or lozenge. And Cross the engraver about this time applied his craft to music, using at first copper plates; others engraved on pewter, and soon the new style put England in the front rank for music-printing. But it is much to be doubted whether the average congregational worshipper used a tune-book in meeting-house; the melody learned by ear probably sufficed.

The melodies of the seventeenth century have established themselves, forty being still in use which appeared between 1615 and 1645, fifty more which came out after 1650. The names of most of these show that they came from Germany, the land of song; but others testify to British origin: *Asaph*, *Bedford*, *Burford* (attributed to Purcell), *St. James*, *St. Madocs*, *Southminster*, *Walsall*, *Winchester New*. Especially is John Bishop of King's College and Winchester Cathedral to be thanked, that in 1700 he complemented Tate and Brady's new version by a *Sett of New Psalm Tunes in Four Parts*.

His setting of the Hundredth Psalm is still in use, under the alternative titles of *Bishop*, *Ilsley*, *Winchester College*. It may be noted that the tune *Winchester* was so named only in 1750 by Thomas Moore of Manchester; he borrowed it from the Foundery tune-book of 1742, whither Wesley brought it from Freylinghausen's 1704 book at Halle, which took it from the 1690 Hamburg *Musikalisches Handbuch*. Names can easily mislead unless we track the history.

In 1703 appeared a supplement to Tate and Brady's version of the Psalter, containing their versions of the usual hymns, and the tune we call *St. Luke*. The whole collection then received authorization from the

Queen in Council, so that it might be used in parish churches. To them we owe

While shepherds watched their flocks by night

in the standard old common metre. Their work made its way in London, where the charity schools were trained to lead the singing. Also in the religious societies, which enlisted the most earnest men of the time, singing was allowed in the quaint direction: 'Then a psalm may be sung: all standing up in this exalted part of divine Worship'. Outside the cities, in the country, too often Sternhold and Hopkins were endeared by long use, and as the cultured could barely tolerate their version, the parish clerk was too often left to drone by himself, unless some fine lady from London saw fit to show off her trills.

Meantime organs were coming in again, and equipping palaces, colleges, cathedrals, though Christopher Wren objected to the 'confounded box of whistles' at new St. Paul's. The ordinary parish church was slow to acquire one, though after the Great Fire, an organ was placed in St. Peter's on Cornhill as early as 1682. Of course, Dissenters never dreamed of such instruments in their meeting-houses.

On the other hand, the Roman Catholics had no attachment to metrical psalms, and much to the old Latin hymns. This, however, was modified in two stages, Latin and English. We have already noticed that primers by 1500 contained a few English versions: before Henry VIII broke with Rome, more than a hundred editions appeared in print, besides a separate *Jesus Psalter*. But Leo X started a new Latin movement, harking back from the Latin of his own day, or even that of Jerome's day, to that of Cicero and

Vergil: this involved the abandonment of the splendid rhymed hymns of the Middle Ages. There were revisions of the Roman Breviary in 1525, 1527, 1555, 1602, till some finality was attained in 1635. This edition contained a very few of the time-honoured hymns, drastically recast, and many which were quite new. Then a Paris Breviary came out in 1680, on the same principles.

English Roman Catholics were educated at Rome, Rouen, St. Omer, Douai, Rheims, and imbibed these new fashions. They were for long very reluctant to use English, but against their inclinations felt obliged to offer first a Testament, then a Bible, then primers. Fortunately they drew on hymns ancient as well as modern, and in the later stages they had the great help of Dryden in translating. Thus from the seventh century he produced:

Creator Spirit, by whose aid
The world's foundations first were laid.

A Spanish sonnet, attributed to Saint Teresa, had inspired Francis Xavier to a fine new hymn, which by 1686 was put into German. There it caught the attention of the Moravians and found its way into Protestant circles. Into English it has been rendered often, at second- and third-hand; the version now in general use is due to an English Catholic direct from the Latin:

My God, I love Thee, not because
I hope for heaven thereby.

Thus, by 1706, English Roman Catholics had versions of all the new Breviary hymns.

In music, they shared the general reforms of their Church: there was a return, guided by Palestrina in

1565, to the old Gregorian plain-song, with harmonies permitted; folk-song was deliberately eschewed. And though there have been innovations, yet in this century Rome has again ordered a limitation to Palestrinized Gregorian. But Philip Neri at his Oratory developed the old mystery plays and set them to music: if these were somewhat frowned upon, they were transplanted to concert halls, and shorn of the acting; but they retained the name oratorio. In this shape, however, they were not by any means congregational; only choirs and musical amateurs could spare time to practise. Catholic music, flowing thus in special channels, hardly enriched ordinary English worship till about 1850.

CHAPTER VII

THE INFLUENCE OF ISAAC WATTS

On the fair Banks of gentle *Thames*
I tun'd my Harp; nor did celestial Themes
Refuse to dance upon my Strings:
There beneath the Evening Sky
I sung my Cares asleep, and rais'd my Wishes high
To everlasting Things.

Now be my Harp for ever dumb:
My Muse attempt no more. 'Twas long ago
I bid adieu to mortal Things,
To *Grecian* Tales, and Wars of *Rome*;
'Twas long ago I broke all but th' immortal Strings.
ISAAC WATTS, 19th July, 1706.

CHAPTER VII

THE INFLUENCE OF ISAAC WATTS

ISAAC WATTS was born in 1674 at Southampton, whither he returned in 1694, after studying at Stoke Newington. He found the hymns of Barton used in the Independent congregation so poor, after his London experience, that he declared he could do better himself; his father, himself a poetaster, encouraged him to try, and the Southampton church was the first to use any of his work. In 1698 he became co-pastor of a London congregation, and thus he obtained a position which gave opportunity for the practical use of his hymns.

Putting together all writers of English hymns before 1707, however few and obsolete, not two hundred were known to Daniel Sedgwick, the first British hymnologist. And among the Congregationalists, only three authors were in general use, Barton, Mason, Shepherd, though Davis of Rothwell put out a second edition in 1694. A new era opened for them when Isaac Watts published his *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, with an essay prefixed. In this he stated clearly what kind of poem he believed to be needed, and was supplying. It must be evangelical, must not be trammelled by Hebrew thoughts or models, and must be the response of the worshipper to God. The Bible Psalms were not to be disused, but were to be treated like other parts of the Bible, and read as God's word to man.

It is probable that Watts, in Thomas Rowe's Academy at Stoke Newington, had studied the principles of rhetoric laid down by Thomas Sprat, and fathered by him on the new Royal Society.¹ Objecting to high-flown style, he says that the Fellows aim as 'a close, naked, natural way of speaking . . . preferring the language of artisans, countrymen, and merchants before that of wits and scholars'. If to an F.R.S. this was a discipline, it was natural to Watts and his circle; and he quite deliberately carried it into his verse. It affected also his metre, and turning away from the Continental variety found in the popular psalm-book, he limited himself almost entirely to the common metre, with its two varieties of short and long. That he could do better is to be seen in the poems, odes, elegies, in his *Horae Lyricae*; but these were not meant for congregational use:

How fair is the rose! what a beautiful flower!
 The glory of April and May!
 But the leaves are beginning to fade in an hour,
 And they wither and die in a day.

Fortunately, when the issue of his hymns met with an immediate welcome and the establishment of a lecture at the King's Weigh-House on 'How to Sing', he was encouraged to go further. His final edition of 1709 gave 355 hymns, with doxologies, and was reprinted scores of times. In 1715 he took a leaf out of the Baptist book, and issued *Divine Songs for the Use of Children*, which assumed permanent form in 1720. The year before that, he copied Patrick, and published a volume of hymns called frankly *The Psalms of David Imitated in the language of the New Testament, and applied to the Christian state and worship*. This

¹ G. Saintsbury, *Short History of English Literature*, p. 512.

he announced as completing his 'Sufficient Provision for Psalmody'. The *Divine and Moral Songs* usually circulated separately, and were used chiefly in the home. But after his death in 1748, the *Hymns* and *Psalms Imitated* were usually bound together. Among the Congregationalists they had all but a monopoly. By 1784 George Burder produced a supplement to Watts, gathered from many writers, and once the ice was broken, other collections came into favour with Congregationalists.

His influence was great in Presbyterian circles; though two assistants at the Presbyterian church in Silver Street, Thomas Gibbons and Joseph Grigg, published homiletical hymns of the Baptist type, of which a few remain in use. By 1757 Presbyterians produced collections of their own; and with 1795 their printers and editors frankly reproduced the custom of their congregations, toning down the Christology and omitting the doxologies.

Baptists used Watts, but without the slavish adherence of the Independents or the liberties taken by the Presbyterians. And as they had an older tradition, that the hymn was summary of a doctrinal sermon, they were by no means silenced. Their original work must be estimated separately.

In Scotland, Watts slowly wakened echoes, and before his death there was a demand for paraphrases. The official reply was very gradual: a draft of 1750 was revised in 1775 and authorized for public use only in 1781, when five or six hymns were added. The Church of Scotland had had in this period the example of the Glassite book of 1749.

The effect of Watts was first to break down the monopoly of psalm-singing in the Free Churches,

even though the Congregationalists riveted his own yoke on their necks instead. Secondly, he enunciated a new theory of what should be sung: and herein he utterly opposed the ecclesiastical type, where Bible words were used almost entirely. He pleaded for a real experimental response; Christians to sing what they felt. His principles were adopted by few authors, though they won Addison and Doddridge; but the average Congregational church was well satisfied with his work. Some of this was so good that even the editor of yesterday who wished for a worthy Anglo-Catholic Hymnal, where every hymn should be the production of a Catholic, regretfully acknowledged that the uninstructed taste of the English public in 1889 necessitated the inclusion in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* of three versions and six hymns by an Independent minister. Every Christian presumably wishes to survey the wondrous cross, to rise on the wings of faith into the land of pure delight, where he may join his cheerful songs with angels round the throne.

The apathy of the Church of England in the matter of congregational song was remarkable. All the musical strength was concentrated at the cathedrals and other places where a choir of professional musicians was maintained. Anthems were written, the canticles were set, chants were composed for the prose psalms, but rarely were new tunes published for the metrical psalms. Worthy of mention, therefore, is William Croft of the Chapel Royal and Westminster Abbey, to whom may be due *St. Anne's*, and who certainly contributed to the sixth edition of Tate and Brady's Supplement in 1708, *St. Matthew*, and a new tune to the 149th Psalm of the New Version, and the 104th Psalm of the Old, which under the newer name,

Hanover, is perennial.¹ He sent several tunes to Playford's *Harmonia Sacra* in 1714, and in 1722 to the *Divine Companion*, which contained another by his colleague, Jeremiah Clark, since called *St. Magnus*.

Croft is sometimes remembered because next year he issued a collection of anthems with all the parts engraved, a new thing, explaining that thus every singer could have the full score, and understand the relation his own part bore to the others. Of his tunes, the best known to-day are *London*, *Northampton*, and one which he wrote to the 148th Psalm, called after him. Maurice Greene, his successor at the Chapel Royal, not only did much for cathedral music, but produced a fine tune for Watts's 'Come ye that love the Lord', christened *Brentford*, which is still in use.

But we have dismal accounts of the music in country parishes.² Thomas Mace in 1676 lamented: "'Tis sad to hear what whining, toting, yelling, or screeking there is in many country congregations'. This degeneration from the Tudor period was due partly to the Scottish influences, for the metrical psalters were now published on the Edinburgh model without tunes; and partly to the decline in education, for the Westminster Directory recognised that many did not read, so that the clerk must give out one line at a time. Here and there attempts were made to improve matters, as Addison and Steele show us; but the congregations no longer sang, and the alternatives were jigs in the organ-loft, or ladies from the town quavering and trilling after the clerk had ended. One tune of this type has, however, become standard, and when we roll out the hallelujahs on Easter, we have a tune

¹ John S. Bumpus, *English Cathedral Music*, p. 206.

² J. T. Lightwood, *Hymn Tunes and their Story*, p. 76.

Resurrection, which first appeared in 1708 in *Lyra Davidica*.¹ The composer deliberately broke away from the monotonous old tunes, appealing to the German custom of free song; and including *Eisenach*, Nicolai's *Morning Star*, and his *Sleepers Wake*, known best to us in Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise*; but he seems also to have drawn inspiration from the English music of the cathedral and the concert hall.

In the north the two great musical counties maintained a fine tradition, one book of tunes coming in 1718 from Halifax, by John Chetham, the curate of Skipton. This was of the old type, one note to one syllable; it ran through a dozen editions that century, and is still popular after repeated revisions; it introduced *Burford*.

Caleb Ashworth was a Rossendale Baptist, and as he left dale and denomination, the result was to carry on the traditions into Midland Congregational circles. In 1760 he published a *Collection of Tunes* gathered from many sources. One he had found in a Dublin book of 1749, where it was set to Watts's 'Time, what an empty vapour 'tis'; he gave it the name *Irish*, and started it on a long lease of popularity. The composer is unknown, but it is suggestive that another Lancashire Baptist, John Johnson, was evangelizing then in Dublin, and publishing through the same firm. Ashworth also printed a Christmas tune by John Wainwright of Stockport, written about 1750 to Byrom's hymn, 'Christians, awake'. This also has become standard, though its identity is sadly disguised under the place-names of *Mottram*, *Stockport*, *Leamington*, *Dorchester*, *Bethlehem*, *Longtown*, *Walworth*, *Yorkshire*, to say nothing of its composer's name.

¹ *Hymns, Ancient and Modern*, Historical Edition, p. lxxxvii.

Ralph Harrison, minister at Cross Street, Manchester, schoolmaster, and professor at the Manchester Academy, felt the need of a new tune-book, and issued one about 1780, in which he printed several of his own tunes, one named after the academy where he had been educated, *Warrington*.

Here appeared, for the first time outside a magazine, a tune to Perronet's 'All hail the power'. As Harrison found it anonymous, he named it *Scarborough*, and only in the sixth edition of Addington's collection did that minister confer upon it the name of his own London meeting-house in *Miles Lane*, by which it is now known. The tune was due to William Shrubsole, chorister at the cathedral in Canterbury, in which city Perronet was the Independent minister; but before he claimed it, it had been varied more than once in the north of England and in Scotland, to suit the taste of the eighteenth century for Handelian roulades. Harrison also included in his collection a fine tune which had already appeared in the book for Magdalen Chapel during 1762; to this he now gave the name *Montgomery*.

William Longford may have led the way in the south, with his *Collection of Tunes* in 1719, used at the various classes he held in the Dissenting meeting-houses of London.¹ Four years later, William Wheale, organist at St. Paul's, *Bedford*, wrote a tune named after the town, which was chimed from the church tower for a century. John Church, master of the Westminster choristers, also published, in 1723, an *Introduction to Psalmody*, including some tunes by Croft, and Addison's paraphrase of Psalm 23 set to music by Henry Carey, dramatist and song-writer. The contrast between Anglican psalm-singing and Dissenting hymn-singing

¹ J. T. Lightwood, *Hymn Tunes and their Story*, p. 113.

in 1730 is well brought out by this, and by *Harmonia Perfecta*, issued by Nathaniel Gawthorne, who succeeded Longford as the second Professor of (what was still called) Psalmody. For Gawthorne took the beautiful lyric of Dr. Thomas Campion, now a century old:

Never weather-beaten sail more willing bent to shore,
and set it to music. It is a fair instance of eighteenth-century taste, for not only was the long line broken into two, but the word Sail was altered to Souls, and other liberties were taken with the text. Campion's trochaic metre was fresh in sacred music, and in Charles Wesley's hands it soon became popular. Another London clergyman, Robert Seagrave, wrote several hymns for his congregation, of which

Rise, my soul, and stretch thy wings

has carried Campion's metre to other books. For another variety, the amphibrach, especially dear to High Calvinists such as Hart, a popular tune was taken from Handel's opera *Sosarme*, and fitted with the pious name of *David*. But the monotony of the verse has been well exposed in Alexander Pope's familiar lines:

Some to church repair,
Not for the doctrine, but the music there.
These equal syllables alone require,
Though oft the ear the open vowels tire;
While expletives their feeble aid do join,
And ten low words oft creep in one dull line.¹

The Church of England spent its energy at this period chiefly in organ music. At the famous church of St. Magnus, a builder installed an instrument in

¹ *Essay on Criticism*, II, 142.

1712 which had a section of its pipes enclosed in a box with movable louvres; this 'swell' organ has become standard. Then next year to Boston across the Atlantic, an organ was exported, and was used in the Queen's Chapel for the liturgical service. But there was no compromise with those who desired either hymns or congregational singing. The one development in this line was due to the London charity schools. In 1739 Captain Coram procured the foundation of the Foundling Hospital, and as the children were in constant residence, there were great possibilities of giving them a musical training. Handel's interest in this place was great, as is now commemorated by the names of some streets near Coram Street, and the *Messiah* was regularly performed there. Then in 1758 an Orphan Home was founded at Lambeth, complemented by a Female Penitentiary. The second Professor of Psalmody was William Riley, who, in 1762, published his *Parochial Harmony*, containing many old tunes re-christened after London churches, such as Clark's *St. Magnus*, Jones's *St. Stephen*. He also published a volume of *Psalms and Hymns*, containing a tune by Nares for Psalm 23, now known as *Winchester New*. The singing at these asylums became famous; Duché, the chaplain, interested Barthélemon, a leading violinist, who wrote for the children to sing Ken his *Morning Hymn*. This led to Barthélemon becoming instructor. He was succeeded by J. W. Callcott, the famous glee writer, who in 1791 brought out, jointly with Samuel Arnold, the organist of the Chapel Royal, *The Psalms of David for the Use of Parish Churches*, which contained a new tune called *Arnold's*. The next organist, William Horsley, also conferred his name on a tune he wrote for the children.

While, however, the singing at these asylums became famous, yet it remained a thing passively enjoyed, not actively shared in by any congregations. Thus William Jones, the versatile Hutchinsonian, deplored publicly in 1789 that the psalmody of country churches was universally complained of; and Dr. Burney in his *History of Music*, two years later, summed up that despite the multiplicity of new tune-books, yet for a century only two new tunes had rooted themselves in actual church use, *Croft's* 104th Psalm, and the *Easter Hymn*. This verdict was only on the psalmody of the Established Church, not on the hymnody of Dissent. And how this was at once remedied by Edward Miller of Doncaster, Samuel Arnold and John Well and Callcott of London, can only be appreciated when we see the great strides made by Baptists, by Methodists, and the musical public generally, under a renewed wave of German influence coming in from Hanover.

CHAPTER VIII

BAPTISTS IN ENGLAND AND AMERICA

The day is past and gone;
The evening shades appear:
Oh, may I ever keep in mind,
The night of death draws near!

Lord, keep me safe this night,
Secure from all my fears:
May angels guard me while I sleep
Till morning light appears.

JOHN LELAND,
Massachusetts and Virginia.

CHAPTER VIII

BAPTISTS IN ENGLAND AND AMERICA

THE influence of the two Keaches was strong in America, where indeed Elias had made his first appearance, and had planted the first church in Philadelphia.

It is not to be wondered at that Baptists soon were making singing an attractive part of worship. And when the musical bent of Wales is considered, it is easy to understand that the churches in the Welsh Tract of Pennsylvania were the first to be noted in this way. Those of Newport and Boston only followed suit after Valentine Wightman published a circular letter on the subject, though the Rogerenes had been nicknamed the Singing Quakers before 1700.

What they sang is not so certain. One writer conjectures that they used the *Bay Psalm Book*; but there is no evidence of their adopting this favourite of their former persecutors. The Welsh were far more likely to bring some of their own. It is worth observing that some compositions which soon died in England, retained an American footing quite into living memory; such as Henry Jessey's 'Unclean, unclean, and full of sin', Keach's 'My soul, mount up with eagle wings'.¹ Now there were many emigrants to America from their churches, and it seems more than likely that they took over many hymns in memory and in manuscript.

George Whitefield began his career of revival and song with 1738. Tate and Brady was reprinted at

¹ W. Cathcart, *Bapt. Encycl.*, I, 567.

Boston in 1740, while Franklin at Philadelphia put out editions of Watts in 1741 and 1742. Therefore the Philadelphia Association, in 1742, reprinted the 'Confession' of 1677 together with two articles from Keach, of which the former stated that it was enjoined on the churches of Christ to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, in public assembly as well as in family.

Meantime the German Baptists at Germantown and Ephrata had developed great services of song, which, however, were all in their native language, so that their influence on any words was only indirect. Their music was written in a notation peculiar to themselves, so that it could only be reproduced from memory by any English hearers.

Before the eighteenth century closed, Baptist collections by American editors had appeared at Newport, Philadelphia, Germantown, Norwich, Norristown, and New York. And the fine tradition of the ballad burden welled up again in the production of hymns with refrains. The first collection of these appeared at Norwich in 1784, and since then they have swept over all Protestant America, and have been brought to England by Sankey, McGranahan, Phillips, and many another singing evangelist.

In England Baptists were responsible for another innovation, the singing of hymns written by women; a course defensible by those who thought of Miriam, Deborah, and Mary. Yet so delicate was the experiment felt to be, that one woman published under the disguise of 'One to Whom the Lord is Gracious,' and the other under the pseudonym 'Theodosia'. Anne Dutton began her publications with 1734, when she had newly married the pastor of Great Gransden; she continued writing till her death in 1765, but her hymns

have not won a permanent place in any important circle. Anne Steele was daughter of the pastor at Broughton in Hampshire, and her hymns probably were in use there long before they were published collectively in 1760. She struck a new note of devotion to Christ, her hymns being largely emotional and introspective.

At Wisbech, David Culy wrote forty hymns, published in 1726, but he stood aside from the main line of Baptist development. Nathanael Wyles of Terling with his eighteen published at Colchester in 1742 had more influence. Other writers were Daniel Turner of Abingdon in 1747, Benjamin Wallin of Maze Pond in 1750, James Fanch of Romsey in 1761. The case of Wallin is peculiarly interesting as he succeeded Abraham West, who had made it a condition of accepting the pastorate in 1736 that the church should sing at its worship; it had originated in 1691 by a secession from Keach's church of those opposed to singing, and throughout the long pastorate of Benjamin's father, Edward, had confined its devotions to reading, praying, preaching. Benjamin Beddome also, at Bourton-on-the-Water from 1740, was writing hymns for the use of his own congregation, afterwards published appended to the sermons they summarized.

In the north of England there was a perfectly independent movement, far too little known in the south. In 1717 a young man of Quaker extraction, Alverey Jackson, settled as pastor of the Baptist Church at Barnoldswick, in Yorkshire, four miles north of Colne in Lancashire. He at once 'made an essay to restore the gospel ordinance of singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, which was wholly cast off and lost by then'. A sermon on the duty of singing, which must

have lasted two hours, survives. And within two years the question was formally propounded to the Association meeting, at Rawdon, which in 1719 agreed that singing was a moral duty to be continued in the churches of Christ. Jackson wrote hymns for his sermons, and many have been printed from his MSS.

A little west, Rossendale was a great centre of music, both vocal and instrumental. Just about the same time, a group picturesquely known as the 'Deighn Layrocks', that is, the Larks of Dean village, became Baptist; the group included Nuttalls and Ashworths and Hargreaveses, who were held together by the bond of music.¹ They at once brought their musical gifts and consecrated them to God, so that the worship around Goodshaw and Lumb became extremely attractive. As some people had objected that performing other men's compositions could not be a part of spiritual worship, this difficulty was overcome by their composing new tunes. For instance, James Nuttall wrote *Sparkling Roger*, *Bocking Warp*, *Lark Tune*; his son, James, wrote *Grim Death*; his son, John, wrote *Happy Simeon*; John Hargreaves contributed *Sweet Harmony*; Robert Ashworth was responsible for *Gladness*; Abraham Ashworth produced *Marvellous*, *Novelty*, etc. These titles show the startling originality of this Lancashire school. In the singing pew there came violinists, 'cellist, double-bass, flutist, clarinet-player, and even trumpeters. And thus, two centuries ago, was founded a fine tradition of original hymns, original tunes, orchestral accompaniment. Even now, a southerner who comes across the Whitsuntide School hymn-sheets may be surprised to find how the north

¹ R. J. V. Wylie, *The Baptist Churches of Accrington*, p. 118. *Baptist Quarterly*, IV, 43.

leads. For many years the north was content with MS. copies, sometimes kept as jealously as the Sistine music at Rome, sometimes lent freely to be copied; but the non-use of the printing press concealed from the south the great development in the hill country, till perhaps the middle of the last century. Not until 1829 did Accrington acknowledge the existence of Watts, and supplement their own hymns with some of his, by then rather antiquated.

Samuel Medley of Liverpool improved on the old method of giving out hymns. It had been the custom for the minister, or sometimes the singing-leader, to read out two lines, then for the congregation to sing them; another pair of lines followed, and so on. This occasionally was ruinous to the sense, or was ludicrous from effects produced in the runs and repeats which characterized the music of the eighteenth century, even Handel's. Medley, therefore, had his hymns printed on leaflets and distributed to the congregation, who could then sing by eye and not by ear, without constant prompting from the desk. The hint was quickly taken, and these ephemeral leaflets became the fashion in many a church. It was 1785 before Medley gathered up his productions and issued a volume. Other hymns followed by the close of the century, and among a score or two still in use may be mentioned:

Mortals awake! with angels join:

Awake, my soul, in joyful lays.

John Needham of Bristol issued a volume in 1768, Robert Robinson of Cambridge wrote fewer, but two have retained great popularity:

Mighty God, while angels bless Thee:

Come, Thou fount of every blessing.

John Fawcett, who could not bear to leave his close-fisted and warm-hearted congregation at Hebden Bridge for the attractions of Carter Lane, immortalized the situation in

Blest be the tie that binds,

which excites the derision of many poetical readers, but constantly commends itself to those who feel real Christian love.

A new spirit was indeed stirring in the whole denomination, of which these hymns were one outward sign, while the persistency of Carey in founding the Baptist Missionary Society was another. The prime mover was Andrew Fuller, and though it does not seem that he ever wrote poetry, yet he inspired many to write. Some of these stood distinctly in the old ways, and hymns became rather polemic; yet as Paul consoled himself in similar circumstances, every way Christ was preached. From all the productions by Langford, Langley, Clarke, Dracup, Burnham, Cole, Horne, and others, few are remembered except

Now begin the heavenly theme.

With such a wealth of new hymns, it seemed wise to cull the best from many authors, and the idea of a collection would seem to have been carried into practice first by Baptists. John Ash of Pershore, a school-master, collaborated with Caleb Evans of Bristol. They naturally drew heavily on Baptist writers, but intermixed hymns by Watts, and were liberal enough to borrow from the evangelical clergyman, John Newton. The experiment proved an instant and lasting success; the book reached a tenth edition in 1827, long after the death of the original compilers.

Hitherto the great majority of hymns had come from

ministers, responses to their sermons. But Baptists have always held firmly the priesthood of all believers, and the ministry of song was not to be limited to preachers. This has puzzled some people seeking to trace the hymns on Baptism published in 1773, and often appended to other collections; they were by a shoemaker at Bromsgrove, John Fellows. And in 1806 there appeared a new selection of seven hundred evangelical hymns for private, family, and public worship (many original) from more than two hundred of the best authors, etc. It was supplied with notes as to the authors, an innovation that has been widely appreciated and copied: and it was popular enough to be reprinted often. Its editor, John Dobell, was like Matthew, a custom-house officer.

A new body of Baptists had arisen in the Midlands, with whom were allied a few churches astride the Penines, and one or two older general Baptist churches in Lincolnshire. From 1770 they developed an intense corporate life as the New Connection, and one evidence of this was a book of hymns and spiritual odes issued at Halifax in 1772. The Midland section responded twelve years later with the *Barton Hymns*; Deacon put out a third collection in 1793, again entitled *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, and when the Barton book was revised, he followed suit in 1800 with a 'New and large collection'. It is somewhat remarkable that while the modern *Baptist Church Hymnal* is lineally descended on the one side from the official New Connexion book, not one of these early hymns has retained a place: probably their piety was greater than their poetry.

The Welsh have ever been susceptible to poetry and music, as their Eisteddfods testify to the unedified

Englishman. Yet it was not till 1774 that Benjamin Francis of Shortwood issued a Welsh Collection, which he improved twelve years later: Joseph Harris of Swansea published another in 1796, Titus Lewis of Carmarthen a third in 1798.

The Scotch Baptists formed another compact group, and as Presbyterians would barely tolerate paraphrases, and would not sanction hymns, they brought out their own collection in 1786, which passed through several revisions.

These examples were bettered next year by John Rippon, a minister of great enterprise and commercial ability, who came from the west country to the post of vantage in Southwark occupied by a church originating from Keach's. He decided to adopt Watts as a whole, in his two books bound together, and to supplement with a 'selection of hymns from other authors'. This voluminous collection came out in 1787, and despite its bad arrangement won instant favour, far beyond Baptist bounds. It was exported to America, and there was promptly pirated by other publishers. Within thirteen years it had reached its ten editions, each varied; Rippon enlarged it again in 1827. When rearranged after his death, the *Comprehensive Rippon* of 1844 contained 1,174 hymns, nor did it die out till his successor, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, produced *Our Own Hymnbook* in 1866, gently chaffing the congregation which had so long been loyal to Rippon's memory.

It does not appear that many Baptists excelled in writing tunes during this eighteenth century, though in its last year Gabriel Davis, the leader at Portsea,¹ published *Sacred Music*, with forty tunes, of which

¹ J. T. Lightwood, *Hymn Tunes and their Story*, p. 236.

Monmouth may still be heard. And at the same time Thomas Jarman of Clipstone chose the same title for the first of his many books. But at least they were eclectic, and Rippon was wise enough both to engage a good leader, Thomas Walker, and then to collaborate with him in bringing out a book of tunes in 1811 to accompany his hymn-book. This was well pushed, and ran to many editions.

Some Baptist churches may still be found in isolated places which cling to the methods of that age. In the pews may be seen old-fashioned tune-books printed from copper plates, vocal score with ancient clefs. A precentor blows a pitch-pipe, calculates the key-note, which he hums to a few neighbours, and then with the second or third note the whole congregation joins in. Such little Bethels still exhibit to the Christian a type of severe and genuine piety, to the musician a specimen of fine unaccompanied part-song. By the end of the eighteenth century, the reluctance of the old school of General Baptists to congregational singing had died out. But organs were still anathema in such circles, though, despite Andrew Fuller's dictum that instrumental music was utterly unsuited to the genius of the Gospel dispensation, strings and wind might be found in many a table-pew, especially north of Trent and Mersey.

Church after church in these parts upheld the tradition, and all local sketches emphasize the importance of the congregational singing and playing. Newbigging described in his *History of Rossendale* the effect produced on him, the weird exultant music of *Glad Tidings*, the *Hallelujah Chorus* sung by the majority of the congregation. It is remarkable that occasional opposition arose from the ministers, a sign that in very

unlikely circles, the demand of the people at large might be balked by the pride of office. The orchestra was at last undermined by the organ in chapel after chapel; Cloughfold accepted the first gift of the Greeks in 1852, and Lumb was shortsighted enough to buy an instrument six years later. It might have played the Dead March for the Deighn Layrocks; their help was gradually confined to special occasions, and by the end of the century the society had breathed its last, leaving behind it a sweet fragrance.¹ In the Rawten-stall Library is a sketch of its long career, and one of the many MS. tune-books, showing one hundred and fifty original compositions, 'teeming with runs and repetitions, and often finishing with a rolling chorus'. A ballad, sung to *Bocking Warp*, commemorates the old times:

Aw think just naah aw see um stand
 Wi' candle lifted, book i' hand;
 While others on th' owd table spread
 Ther book, un pept o'er fiddler's yed.
 Then one, two, three, they all began,
 Un th' crotchets, quavers, heaw they ran!
 Th' owd singers sang, un th' fiddlers bow'd,
 Th' effect uth' song con neer be tow'd.

¹ *Baptist Quarterly*, IV, 46.

CHAPTER IX

GERMAN PIETISTS, MORAVIANS, AND DUNKERS

From the length and intricacy of their metres, many of them may seem to English readers adapted rather to purposes of private than of public devotion. But the singing of hymns forms a much larger and more important part of public worship in the German Reformed Churches than in our own services. It is the mode by which the whole congregation is enabled to bear its part in the worship of God, answering in this respect to the chanting of our own Liturgy.

CATHERINE WINKWORTH.

One of the noblest aims of music consists in advancing religion, and in edifying and elevating the human soul.

CARL PHILIPP EMANUEL BACH.

CHAPTER IX

GERMAN PIETISTS, MORAVIANS, AND DUNKERS

THE accession of a Hanoverian king in 1714 drew attention to many things German, and English hymnody profited again by certain developments. There were three distinct religious movements there, each producing a fresh outburst of song: the Pietist, the Moravian, the Dunker. Of these three, the Pietist revival within the Established Churches, centring in Franck's philanthropic institutions at Halle, had a double effect, in hymns and in music; but the difference of language long postponed its full value in the poetry. Yet we may note how John Wesley published pioneer versions from Freylinghausen in his earliest books, though he did not realize the worth of Gerhard, already a classic. Wesley did not give much hint of the hundreds of hymns published, and a century passed before these were really appreciated in England. Such modern versions as

All my heart this night rejoices,

The day departs; our souls and hearts,

Who as Thou makes blest?

may show a variety of metre that would be looked at askance by men trained to the deliberate monotony of Watts.

There was less difficulty with music, which needs no

translator. England waked to learn the developments of a hundred and fifty years, including such tunes as *Bremen* by Melchior Vulpius, the evening hymn curiously misnamed *Dijon*, Kocher's *Dix*, Rinckart's *Nun Danket*, Bach's conversion of Hasler's love song into the famous *Passion Chorale*, and Bach's conversion of Heinrich Isaac's music in 1490 to the Emperor Maximilian's '*Innsbruck, I must leave thee*'.

G. F. Handel settling in London and Dublin is but an illustrious example of what diversified the range of English music. From the immense mass of his own compositions, many hymn-tunes have been selected or arranged, and those from *Samson*, *Solomon*, and *Theodora* hold their own still. He was also asked by Wesley to compose half a dozen tunes expressly for congregational song, and *Gopsal* is the best known of these. Unfortunately, he wrote down to the level of taste, and all these are in the familiar metres. Others of this period are *Franconia*, *Heinlein*, *Munich*.

John Wesley was a medium by whom the great Moravian movement was acclimatized to some extent. The *Unitas Fratrum* at Herrnhut issued a *Song Book* in 1736, and the influence exerted on Wesley during his voyage to Georgia is well known. Next year he and his brother printed some English versions and hymns at Charles Town, and another edition at London in 1738. John's contributions include Gerhardt's 'Commit thou all thy griefs', Tersteegen's 'Thou hidden love of God', Silesius's 'Thee will I love, my Strength, my Tower', Rothe's 'Now I have found the ground wherein', and Zinzendorf's 'Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness'. Wesley so profited by his Moravian friend, that he went to the Continent to study the movement. His *Journal* shows what he

learned as to hymns. At Amsterdam he was the guest of a Mennonite minister, who had translated part of the Herrnhut hymn-book, and Wesley could follow the singing intelligently. That incident shows how the Anabaptists, pioneers of experimental hymns in the vernacular, were now drawing on other sources. A Lutheran service is described at length: it included a long voluntary on the organ, closed with a hymn sung by all the people sitting; a second hymn, to the organ, by all the people; a third hymn; the creed in rhyme; another hymn. Wesley was evidently much surprised by the organ, the congregational song, hymns and not psalms. The Moravians added to the usual Lutheran parish services their own, including singing every morning at eight, every evening at eight, open-air singing round the town on Sunday evening by the young men. In their schools they instructed the little children chiefly by hymns, whereby they found the most important truths successfully insinuated into their minds.

It is clear that Wesley was deeply impressed by these features, and that they supplied him with lessons which he taught in English, and so acclimatized their best. He did, however, break with the Moravians because of the very great stress which they laid on the physical suffering of the Saviour, as may be seen in Zinzendorf's hymn above: his brother shows a better way of regarding the death of Christ in his 'All ye that pass by'.

Quite apart from the channel of Wesley, the Moravians made good their footing in England. However aloof they may still hold themselves from the main currents of religious life here, yet in two respects their imprint on English music has been important. They

issued in 1744 a *Chorale Book* for the use of their English adherents. Ten years later, Zinzendorf put out a most elaborate hymnal, where the wealth of Christian song was systematized, and quite a new vista was opened to English congregations. The historical divisions were into Scripture anthems, Scripture hymns, Songs of the Primitive Church, of the ancient Brethren, of sixteenth-century Germans, of ancient English, of seventeenth-century Germans, of English and Germans to date, and of modern Moravians. Various classes were catered for, especially children. Great variety of metre was introduced, as the English versions were made to accord with the tunes imported from Herrnhut, compare *Spire*; and full instrumental parts were indicated. The book might well have initiated a new epoch, had it not been for the repulsive tone of many of its lyrics. From this defect William Hammond, one of the English Moravians, was free, and his book of original hymns and translations in 1745 might yield more than

Lord, we come before Thee now.

When Butts issued his *Harmonia Sacra* about ten years later, he reproduced one of Neander's chorales to an exceptional metre, and this holds its own for Wesley's 'Old Year Hymn', as *Ringland*.

Much less known is the development of song among the eighteenth-century German Baptists; ¹ indeed, the very existence of such a body seems hardly familiar to many, and it may be necessary to say that they have no connection with the Anabaptists of two centuries earlier, and none with another group that sprang up in the nineteenth century. They originated

¹ J. F. Sachse, *German Sectarians of Pennsylvania*, III, 128-60.

in Pietist circles, where the study of the Bible led to the conclusion that every one must make his own personal confession of Christ in baptism, irrespective of what his parents or others had promised in his infancy. By 1727 this new body was so well established in the Rhine valley that an elaborate system of choir singing was in vogue. The political conditions, however, were so unfavourable for them, that some emigrated to Pennsylvania. Their report of the conditions there was so promising that within twenty years nearly the whole of the German Baptists had crossed thither; and there they are to this day, known as Pennsylvania Dutch, Tunkers, Dunkers, or Dunkards.

They quickly established a singing-school at Ephrata, into which Ludwig Blum introduced some English modifications. By 1745 they published a tune-book, handicapped by an original notation, so that it never became popular outside their own circle. Hymn-books followed in 1747 and 1754, and the German population could, and did, use these to some extent. Within the general body there were two communities of celibates, who devoted themselves entirely to composing, copying, and singing music; their manuscripts are still a wonder. But the musical theories of the leader have found no acceptance, and the remarkable choral effects are no longer reproduced.

Towards the close of the century they began to melt into their surroundings, and one sign of this was the issue of a hymn-book in English. It does not appear that any of their hymns have re-crossed the Atlantic and found their way into English Baptist books; but it is possible there has been some influence on the ordinary American Baptist. It is to be noted, however,

that like the Moravians, the Dunkers are still a class quite notably apart.

It is a question whether the addiction of Lancashire and Yorkshire to stringed bands is a continuance of an English tradition or a revival due to Germany. In any case, it is to be noticed that the weavers and spinners diversified their lives with violin part-music of the madrigal type. When, therefore, these people met on Sunday, especially after the Methodist revival, they naturally tended to more serious music. We have details how some devoted themselves to oratorios, then composed anthems, and then transferred their talents to Nonconformist meeting-houses. Many old records refer to the innovation, and show how the deacons would tolerate at first only the bass, then admitted a string quartet, and gradually winked at the table-pew or the gallery housing a miscellaneous band. A century ago, this might include flute, clarinet, basoon, and even brass. These performers readily coalesced with the more enthusiastic singers, so that a choir and orchestra of amateurs became common in large dissenting chapels.

CHAPTER X

THE METHODIST AND EVANGELICAL HYMNODY

Servant of God, the summons hear;
Thy Master calls, arise, obey!
The tokens of His will appear,
His providence points out the way.

Lord of the wide-extended main,
Whose power the winds and seas controls,
Whose hand doth earth and heaven sustain,
Whose Spirit leads believing souls:

For Thee we leave our native shore
(We whom Thy love delights to keep),
In other worlds Thy works explore,
And see Thy wonders in the deep.

CHARLES WESLEY, *On Whitefield
Embarking for America.*

CHAPTER X

THE METHODIST AND EVANGELICAL HYMNODY

THROUGH the grim life of the parsonage at Epworth, as revealed to us in the story of Hetty Wesley, there rings one redeeming note, a love of poetry and music. This descended to the three sons, Samuel, John, and Charles, especially to the last, and through him was transmitted to another Charles, another Samuel, composer of *Doncaster* and *Hierapolis*, and yet a third Samuel Sebastian, who are all well known in the roll of organists and composers. But for congregational singing they did little; it is for us to note how John and Charles not only kindled a new religious life in England, but also beautified it with their poetry and song.¹ Then to observe how, through their independent colleagues, the impulse was given to evangelicals who strove with more success to remain within the Church of England.

John Wesley began under Moravian auspices, translating from the German of Gerhardt, Rothe, Silesius, Tersteegen and Zinzendorf. While he also composed original hymns, yet he was greatly surpassed by his brother Charles, who wrote no fewer than 6,500 hymns, of which five hundred have stood the test of time in friendly Methodist circles, and perhaps forty or fifty are used by others. In the fashion of the day many circulated at first as mere leaflets, but for

¹ *A New History of Methodism*, Appendix C.

more than forty years hymn-books also were constantly being issued by the Wesleys. They carefully guarded their monopoly, in 1780 the conference ordering that no preacher was to sing a hymn of his own composing, and in 1782 exacting a promise to this effect on pain of expulsion. In music they were less successful with a monopoly. Jonathan Battishill, attending some of Charles Wesley's musical evenings, set twelve of his *Sacred Poems* and published the tunes. One of these, after much re-editing, holds its own, and is named after the composer, *Battishill*.

As early as 1742 a music-book was published, and the sources on which the brothers drew are remarkable. Of the old psalm-tunes they retained only three; from Tate's supplement, then a generation old, they borrowed a few; but the main body of music was new in congregational use. From their Moravian friends they learned somewhat of the wealth of the Continent, and an operatic march of Handel's was solemnly named *Jericho*. This was a good precedent for Charles James in 1788 putting out *Melisse*, borrowed from Rousseau's 1752 opera *Le Devin du Village*, and christened in 1812 by Cramer, *Rousseau's Dream*.¹ But John Wesley was like Luther in his instinct for what was really popular, and being a great traveller, he picked up folk-songs everywhere, and turned them to the account of Christ's cause. Even in 1766 Horace Walpole, in a private letter, wrote that he had 'been at one opera, Mr. Wesley's. They have boys and girls with charming voices, that sing hymns, in parts, to Scotch ballad tunes; but indeed so long, that one would think they were already in eternity, and knew how much time they had before them'.

¹ *Cong. Quarterly*, IX, 169.

There would be reason for the quip if he heard *Cheshunt*, for this melody of Holcombe's gave 343 notes to 46 syllables! It was neatly re-wedded, as being originally a thought for a spring morning, to a hymn from the Song of Solomon, mercifully only two verses long.

For Wesley's second tune-book, he obtained the help of one of Handel's instrumentalists, J. F. Lampe, whom he had recently converted, and who turned from writing comic operas to writing florid hymn-tunes. Against these Wesley's protest was useless, and his prefaces show how vainly he struggled against the taste of the day. In 1761 he put forth a very autocratic tune-book, generally known as *Sacred Melody*, where he insisted on the airs of his choice being printed as they were, not mended. This passed through three editions, and in 1781 was enlarged by the addition of other parts into *Sacred Harmony*.

With all Wesley's love of rule, he recognized that he could not absolutely control every detail, and he did permit that if the tunes of his own selection were used exactly as he printed them, others might be used in addition. And the result was that Methodists became pre-eminently a singing people. But so self-contained were they, that the actual hymns and tunes they used were almost confined to themselves: the *Spiritual Psalmist's Companion*, designed for them in 1772, with such a tang in the names of the tunes as *Cornish*, *Epworth*, *Love Feast*, *Marylebone*, *Olivers*, has contributed to common stock only the last, re-christened *Helmsley* by the vicar of that parish. Thomas Olivers introduced to Methodist circles a tune he heard in 1770 at a Sephardi synagogue in Aldgate; he obtained the melody from the singer, Leoni, after

whom he named the tune, and then wrote to it a hymn prompted by the Hebrew doxology:

The God of Abraham praise.

The melody is very like a chorale of 1560 by Christian Flor of Lüneburg.

Hitherto tunes had usually been named after their birthplaces, but new fashions now became evident. Some are characteristically subjective, as *Complaint*, *Self-Dedication*; some borrow the first lines of the hymns for which they were composed, as *Dying Stephen*, *Shepherd of Israel*; some are for specific occasions, as *Watchnight*, *New Year's Day*, *Morning Song*; some have an ecclesiastical ring, as *Chimes*, *Passion*, *Calvary*, *Whitsunday*; and others advertise their composers, as *Berner's*, *Dryden's*, *Hambleton's*, *Kettleby's*.

Methodists imparted to wider circles a new conception of hymnody; the bald taste of Watts had ruled too long. Every phase of experience was expressed in the new song, and the note of evangelism was most richly sounded. Again, the old versifiers were no poets, were often most wooden in their rhythm, and most scanty in their rhymes. Nor is any sense of humour evident in a man who could publish

'Tis his prerogative
To fix the sacred rite,
Which, like a gate, should to his courts
Each humble soul invite.¹

The Methodists brought literary taste, and though even Charles Wesley dropped into doggerel, they did lift hymns out of the old rut.² In their 'Discipline' the

¹ John Fellows, *When Sion's Glorious King*, verse 6.

² Wesley M. Gewehr, *The Great Awakening in Virginia*, p. 164.

ministers were told: 'In every large society, let them learn to sing, and let them always learn our tunes first'. The movement was not to be deflected by choirs: 'Exhort every person in the congregation to sing, not one in ten only'.

It is often forgotten that there were other Methodists than the Wesleys. One of the original band was Benjamin Ingham, whose influence was great in Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Westmorland. He published two books, from one of which is often reprinted James Allen's

Sweet the moments, rich in blessing

as revised by Walter Shirley. Of this school, besides Robert Seagrave mentioned already, is John Cennick, whose work was so deeply tinged with Moravian influence that few of his hymns are now heard, except:

Children of the heavenly King;

Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb.

The Calvinistic side of the Methodist movement was led by George Whitefield and the Countess of Huntingdon. The former studied music with some young musicians he had converted, learning from them his gam-ut or sol-fa. In 1753 he issued his *Selection for the Tabernacle*, which in forty years ran to thirty-six editions; the *Divine Musical Miscellany* followed in 1754. A curious modification of cathedral practice is evident here, in that the familiar responsive singing between Decani and Cantoris sides was imitated by the men and women who sat on the two sides of the tabernacle. Milgrove of the Countess's chapel in Bath wrote *Harts* specially on this model. Whitefield's influence among the Calvinistic Methodists of Wales

could only be traced adequately for those who appreciate Welsh hymnody, but William Williams of Pantycelyn wrote at least one hymn in both tongues:

Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,

and another shows that the spirit of John Thomas and William Carey could inspire the Welsh music:

O'er the gloomy hills of darkness.

Martin Madan, chaplain of the Lock Hospital, adapted Whitefield for use there, and added new tunes in 1769. He was a musical enthusiast, and often gave oratorios, for the composition of which he enlisted a young violinist called Giardini. To this man, who afterwards went to *Moscow*, we owe the tune now so known, originally advertised as a 'Hymn to the Trinity'.

The Countess of Huntingdon stretched her prerogative as peeress to appoint numerous chaplains officiating on premises owned by her in the fashionable resorts. Some of them issued books, till she decided on one standard book to be used in all her 'chapels', for she carefully adhered to the technical ecclesiastical term, considering that she was in full standing with the Church of England. Her collection appeared in 1780, and its curious oblong appearance marks it out, suggesting at once that it was intended to bind with an oblong book of tunes within an ordinary octavo case. Her relation, Walter Shirley, edited some hymns for it, and it included Haweis's

Enthroned on high almighty Lord,

O Thou from whom all goodness flows,

To Thee, my God and Saviour,

with one often assigned to the countess herself,

When Thou, my righteous Judge, shall come,

and the famous hymn by Edward Perronet of Canterbury,

All hail the power of Jesu's name.

The countess aimed at the cultured classes, therefore she engaged eminent musicians to write tunes, including Handel.

Other writers and compilers of this type were Rowland Hill, De Courcy of Shrewsbury, Simpson of Macclesfield, and Toplady, editor of the *Gospel Magazine*. Of their work, well-known specimens are:

Your harps, ye trembling saints;

Object of my first desire;

Rock of ages, cleft for me.

Rowland Hill had the sense to engage a fine organist at the Surrey Chapel, Benjamin Jacob, who collaborated with Samuel Wesley, gave organ recitals in the chapel, and published *National Psalmody*. He is still remembered by a chant, which affords an easy means of dealing with awkward metres.

The pair of writers who really did most for the Church of England, John Newton and William Cowper, put out a volume known from their home as the *Olney Hymns*. It was unfortunate that the melancholy of Cowper fixed on the whole Evangelical school the stigma of morbidity, which it never lived down, and which indeed was promoted by the great popularity of these hymns.

In the parish churches generally, as distinct from the proprietary chapels and the new philanthropic institutions, very little was done to uphold congregational song.

Any real progress was due not so much to the clergy as to itinerant singing-masters, such as we hear of by the middle of the century in Hampshire. There was not, however, any fine tradition behind them, and too often they were possessed only of what musicians styled a most wretched set of psalm-tunes, in two or three parts, complex, difficult, and devoid of true harmony. Fortunately, not many of these found their way into print. As their stock of music was so poor, it followed often that the average singers were soon repelled, and an amateur choir tended to form itself; a bishop of experience in Chester and London declared that it was quite impossible for the ordinary congregation to join in.¹ This state of things intensified, and held even in musical counties as late as 1811; for in *Shirley* we read both of the singers at the parish churches, and of the Whitsun procession of the Established Church being led by bands, in contrast to the Methodist children who could, without book or notice, strike up a hymn, and to the adults who at prayer-meeting 'passed jauntily from hymn to hymn, and from tune to tune, with an ease and buoyancy all their own'. This is an undesigned acknowledgment of the decay in official circles during the seventy years since William Knapp, parish clerk of Poole, had put forth new tunes for the psalms; one of them keeps his memory green, *Wareham*. A little change may be recognized centrally, though unofficially. The metrical psalms were adapted to the ecclesiastical year, and as the Prayer Book and prose Psalter were reprinted from time to time, odd pages at the end were filled up with hymns; it is said that the Oxford printer was a dissenter, and thus enriched the church store.

¹ Beilby Porteus: Charge, 1790.

The best-known exception to the general apathy is John Darwall of Manchester, who became vicar of Walsall. He wrote new tunes to all Tate and Brady, and secured a faster style of singing. In Whit-week 1773 a new organ was opened for him, and the service closed with the 148th Psalm to a new tune by the vicar, well known still as *Darwall's*.

William Boyce, conductor to the Three Choirs Festival, wrote *Sharon*, and in 1762 contributed *Hereford* to William Hayes's settings of 'Sixteen Psalms from Mr. Merrick's New Version'. This was for use at *Magdalen College*, Oxford, of which Hayes was organist, and another tune by him in the collection was so named. Boyce was aided in his great work on cathedral music by Samuel Howard, of whose tunes good instances are *Lancaster*, *Norfolk*, *St. Bride's*.

When the Methodists definitely organized apart from the Church of England, their friends within the Establishment drew closer to those of ecclesiastical type, and books began to appear in which psalms and hymns were intermingled, arranged not according to personal experience, but according to the church calendar, or the various services in the book of Common Prayer. The status of these excited some alarm, and a law-suit was begun in 1820 to stop all such unauthorized books; it resulted in a decision by the Archbishop of York which assured their place in parochial worship.

By that time a fresh factor had appeared there, barrel-organs. Congregations that could not afford an organ with keys, and could not muster a band of players, were offered by organ-builders a machine almost fool-proof, where you turned a handle, and a tune came out. Indeed there was a variety of tunes

in a variety of keys, and several barrels could be bought to enlarge the repertoire. For fifty years or more, such instruments were to be found in many a gallery, and did their part in supporting the song of the congregation. To-day they are represented by their cousin, the mechanical piano, which traverses our streets, but rarely to support the singing of hymns.

CHAPTER XI

FROM THREE CONTINENTS

There is a gate that stands ajar
And through its portals gleaming,
A radiance from the cross afar,
The Savior's love revealing.
O depth of mercy! can it be
That gate was left ajar for me?
For me: for me:
Was left ajar for me?

LYDIA BAXTER, New York.

From earth to heaven we build a stair,
The name by which we call it, Prayer.

NARAYAN VAMAN TILAK.

Take my heart for Thine, Jehovah!

PASTOR OF AMPAMARINA.

CHAPTER XI

FROM THREE CONTINENTS

AMERICA has seen nearly three centuries of frontier life, which involves missionary effort of a kind unknown in England, whether among natives, or among pioneer whites. In each case it has elicited new song. Samson Occom was a Mohican, converted by Whitefield, who gave his life to evangelizing his people. He collected many hymns in 1774, and wrote two or three, which, however, show nothing distinctive in metre or in thought. Nearly the first original hymn, after a century's barrenness, is by an evangelist roving in Virginia, John Leland:

Christians, if your hearts are warm,
Ice and snow can do no harm.

This was composed for a great baptismal service in 1779, a time when troops were shivering at Valley Forge. Ten years earlier, sixteen hymns by Samuel Davies, president of Princeton, had been published posthumously; they were of the Watts type. Though a few were reprinted in England, nearly the only one that has rooted itself is, 'Great God of wonders, all Thy ways', etc.

As soon as independence was achieved, there was full play for the pioneer. Leland had been leading in the great revival which Whitefield had inspired. At the camp-meetings it was usual to sing short verses

easily learned, and these were generally very definite in their teaching. This was the fountain-head of the stream that irrigated England in the days of McGranahan.

In Nova Scotia, Henry Alline published original hymns by 1784; his *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* reached a fourth edition by 1802, and some are in modern books. The Dunkers of Germantown issued a collection in English by 1791; this was repeatedly revised, and brought a distinctive tradition to a wider circle. Asplund the Swede made a new collection at Baltimore in 1793. Benjamin Cleveland, even earlier, had put forth hymns on 'Different Spiritual Subjects' in Connecticut, while Oliver Holden's *American Harmony*, with its fine *Coronation*, appeared in Massachusetts, 1793. These books show an original vein in all parts of the land; William Staughton indeed utilized the popularity of the *Marseillaise*, and wrote to that tune

Ye sons of God, awake to glory.

The value of singing was widely recognized. When Jacob Bower, of Dunkard extraction, started on his life-long work as a prairie preacher, his library consisted of a German New Testament, an English Bible, and a hymn - book. This he augmented, and the cheery homeliness of his lines obscures their lack of technical merit:

Come tell us your troubles, ye saints of the Lord;
And tell us what comfort you 've found in His word:
Although you 're unworthy, in Jesus be bold,
Tell what a kind Savior has done for your soul.

If less adventurous ministers stayed in the East,

they were awake to the claims of the Redskin: David Benedict was not only an indefatigable historian, but a friend of missions:

Tongues of rudest conformation
Mastered by untiring care,
Words of strangest collocation
Far away Thy light shall bear;
Every version
Onward still Thy light shall bear.

In 1805 there appeared at Richmond a chorus-book, and thenceforward southern melody went its own triumphant way. State rivalled state in its publications, those from Augusta, Louisville, Dover, Cincinnati, Charleston winning more than local fame. Then to camp-meeting songs, were added those of the negroes, especially when they were popularized by the Fisk Jubilee Singers, and when the Coloured Baptists organized sufficiently to establish publishing-houses of their own.

Other writers fell back on the old plan of taking popular tunes and writing new words to them, the plan of Luther and of Thomas Moore. Enoch Freeman pressed into Christian service, *Scots wha hae*:

Rouse ye at the Savior's call
Sinners, rouse ye one and all,
Wake, or soon your souls will fall,
Fall in deep despair.

S. F. Smith was a student at Andover, when a German hymn-book was put into his hands by someone who could not read it. The music attracted them both, and Smith dashed off a new poem, which was used first on Independence Day at a Sunday-school

celebration. Since then it has become almost a national anthem:

My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing.

The northern states prided themselves on the culture of Boston and Philadelphia, and on the wealth centred at New York; which three cities became seats of great denominational enterprises. The old school put out rival editions, Staughton supplementing Rippon, Winchell arranging Watts, then Watts and Rippon being combined. But the *Psalmist* of Stow Smith, appearing in 1841, gradually won general favour, and served to knit the northern churches for a generation. A formidable rival then appeared in *Sursum Corda*, which by three revisions has kept abreast of the popular taste. From such sources Englishmen have profited by Duffield's hymn 'Stand up!' with Bebb's tune of *New York*.

A great deal of occasional verse was written: Nathanael Colver deliberately revived the earliest English custom of summarizing his sermon in a hymn which he lined out for the congregation. When the old Tremont Theatre in Boston was bought and converted into a church, the Tremont Temple, the strain was raised:

Great God, before Thy reverend name
Within these ransomed walls we bow;
Too long abused by sin and shame,
To Thee we consecrate them now.

But in the northern churches, although the hymn-books are usually published with tunes, the congregation in the cities is being elbowed aside by the

professional quartet, and is sometimes invited to sing only twice at a service. Against this custom there have been vigorous revolts, and the pastor has to reckon on his work being criticized and rivalled by the professional evangelist with his singing partner. These travelling singers are always searching for new airs that can be pressed into service, or new songs; and many of them have composed both words and tunes. In many cases publishers have seen possibilities of profit, and there is great competition in the field of sacred solos with choruses. Some of these have been transplanted to England, where, however, when the original evangelist has passed on, after creating a sale for his book, the congregation will seldom let the soloist display, but insists on singing the whole.

Whosoever heareth, shout, shout the sound,

illustrates the rich evangelical appeal, the free rhythm, and the congregational demand that characterize the class; while

Rescue the perishing, care for the dying,

shows the chorus effect, and in the third verse the use of words which really have no meaning, emotion overcoming sense; for chords neither break nor vibrate, though cords may. English congregations, however, are usually attached to their denominational books, which are seldom enlarged; therefore the book compiled by the travelling evangelist and copyrighted by his publisher, often drops out of use very rapidly, or is used only in undenominational missions. And in America, besides the national taste for something new, there is to be considered the opinion of Henry Ward Beecher: 'The tunes which burden our modern books

by hundreds and thousands, utterly devoid of character, without meaning or substance, may be sung a hundred times, and not a person in the congregation will remember them; there is nothing to remember; they are the very emptiness of fluid noise'.¹ And Professor Lutkin of the North-Western University, makes the positive suggestion that a really great artist could effect more with a sacred musical classic than by the revival songs manufactured for the occasion.

New England made its own contribution to hymns between 1816 and 1850, chiefly by Unitarians and Congregationalists. The new departure began with Henry Ware of Cambridge; most of his hymns were for special occasions, but his Easter song,

Lift your glad voices in triumph on high,

has become well known. He edited the *Christian Disciple*, whose columns made many writers known, notably Andrews Norton. Of the same school was John Pierpont, whose ode at the opening of a church at Salem,

O Thou to whom in ancient time,

is but the best known in England of many in America.

From such men the torch was handed to a new generation. E. H. Sears in 1835 wrote the great carol,

Calm on the listening ear of night;

and fourteen years later matched it with

It came upon the midnight clear.

Meantime, Oliver Wendell Holmes had written

Lord of all being, throned afar;

¹ Quoted in *Cong. Quarterly*, IX, 170.

while Longfellow had penned his *Psalm of Life*, and *Blind Bartimeus*. His brother Samuel, while yet a student at Harvard in 1846, collaborated with Samuel Johnson; their book abounded in new hymns, showing the tradition of culture blossoming in a distinctive way. Martineau made much of Johnson's own work, known in England as early as 1873, including

Holy Spirit, Truth Divine,

while his

City of God, how broad and far,

took new life when sung at the opening of Liverpool Cathedral in 1924. The two friends in 1864 edited *Hymns of the Spirit*, wherein was the mission hymn,

O still in accents sweet and strong.

In that same year appeared another writer, J. W. Chadwick, with his Visitation hymn,

Eternal Ruler of the ceaseless round.

When Johnson and Longfellow first published, Methodists were freeing themselves from the tyranny of Wesley. William Hunter, from Ulster, published in 1845, the *Minstrel of Zion*; it included his

Joyfully, joyfully onward we move,

long acclimatized in English schools. Three years later, David Creamer, an American born, brought out his *Methodist Hymnology*, which marked a new departure. But it was only after 1864 that American Methodists made any great contribution, with Fanny Crosby's two thousand hymns.

The Civil War left its traces in hymnody. Mason

Brayman was editor and lawyer both in Kentucky and Illinois before he wrote:

Unto our God on Judah's hills
 Be songs of holy joy once more:
 Let Canaan's rocks and sparkling rills
 The King of heaven and earth adore.
 For He will set the captive free,
 Will rend the proud oppressor's chain,
 And from the isles of every sea
 Bring Israel to His fold again.

No wonder that he heard the call, and rose to be general in setting the African captive free. On the other hand, just before the conflict, Basil Manly wrote for the Southern Baptist Seminary:

Soldiers of Christ, in truth arrayed,
 A world in ruins needs your aid,
 A world by sin destroyed and dead,
 A world for which the Savior bled.

They would find fresh significance in those words when they reopened the wrecked seminary. And so now as each session begins at Louisville, this hymn calls the men to new consecration.

There has been a finer strain in American music, derived from German immigrants with their *Liedertafel*. A good instance of this is a tune by Carl Zeuner of Brooklyn and Philadelphia, most curiously named *Luther's Chant*, though it is not a chant, and has no association with the great reformer. A fine chorale called *Mannheim* was introduced to England by Lowell Mason, to whom also are due *Olivet* and *Missionary*, the former being sometimes disguised under the name of *Harlan*. His work was made known in Britain by Binney of the Weigh-House in 1853.

The development of Christian hymnody among the

negroes has been remarkable.¹ In their African homes, a careful observer says that there are soloists at all musical functions, even the dirge, 'that low, melancholy, minor wailing of the bereaved', being led by a chief mourner. Most experiences of life are put into song, 'from a lullaby to a religious chant, from a pastoral melody to a hymn of grief, from a jig to a funeral lament'. Their music is antiphonal, the soloist being relieved by a chorus. Every type of instrument is known, drums of all descriptions, dulcimers with nine wooden slabs, four-stringed viols, organs with eleven notes, ocarinas capable of nineteen, a set of seven trumpets tuned to definite notes. They are 'in the age possessing no system of notation, where there is nothing but the bird, the insect, the water brook and the wind, to denote the rise and fall of musical strains. That is where the native is a master of the art, in producing tones and harmonies from the primeval instruments he has invented'.

Unfortunately there seems to be no Christianizing of this native music in Africa; missionaries largely ignore it, and supplant it by European metres and American organs. Yet in three quarters there are at least original hymns. When a new church was being dedicated in Central Africa, forty new hymns were contributed by the converts. On the Congo, Bonjare added thirteen to the new book. In Madagascar, Andraianaivoravelona is most prolific. But none of these African hymns have been translated into English. Fortunately there has been a different development in America, whither about two million negroes were transported. The folk-lore they brought with them was acclimatized; it is interesting to trace the kinship

¹ G. C. Claridge, *Wild Bush Tribes, etc.*, pp. 222, 230, 242.

between the fetish stories of Africa and the tar-baby stories of Uncle Remus. And thus they had their own moulds into which to pour their religious sentiments when they began to assimilate Christianity. About 1776 we hear of a converted negro in Georgia teaching hymns to his people, and encouraging them to sing.¹ He went to Jamaica, and in 1802 one of his successors wrote to England of a great revival when people sang 'psalms, hymns and spiritual songs'. From his conventional phraseology we should have hardly grasped the originality. But a modern friend of the negro reminds us that before Christianity was allowed to the slaves, they sang their melodies in the twilight, voicing their great human sorrow and need.² These plantation melodies 'show that the negro has obtained access to the spiritual deeps, and that he is capable of penetrating the sublime. The words have often little relevance to anything profound, and at best are childish. There is generally a keynote which murmurs through the whole of the song, the function of the *basso profondo* who provides a river of harmony like life itself; and the tenors and baritones and the shriller voices move on this flowing bass like ships. One of the most unforgettable melodies is "O listen to the lambs!" The tenors seem to imitate flocks of innumerable sheep and lambs all crying to one another, whilst the *basso profondo* is the irrelevance of "I want to go to heaven when I die" continually repeated in subterranean mumbling and whispers. The negro soul was very thirsty for religion and drank very deeply of the wells of God. The negroes learned to sing together, thus first of all expressing corporate life.

¹ J. Rippon, *Bapt. Register*, I, 300; IV, 974.

² Stephen Graham, *Children of the Slaves*, pp. 15, 86.

They drew from the story of Israel's sufferings a token of their own life, and they formed their scarcely articulate hymns—which survive to-day as the only folk-music of America:

Go down, Moses, 'way down in Egyp' lan'
Tell ole Pharaoh, Le' ma people go!
Israel was in Egyp' lan'
Oppres' so hard dey could not stan'
Le' ma people go!

or the infinitely pathetic and beautiful

In the valley on my knees
With my burden an' my Saviour,
I couldn't hear nobody pray, O Lord,
Couldn't hear nobody pray.
O—'way down yonder by myself,
I couldn't hear nobody pray.'

The student of poetry and music would be well repaid if he studied these 'spirituals' on the one hand in connection with the melodies in Africa, and on the other in connection with the long evolution of music in Europe. But our present concern is to note that there is now a strong and distinctive type of congregational music and hymn, developed in Christian negro churches, which number more than four million members. A study of these has recently been published which does indeed connect Africa and America. The ancestral drum was replaced by the 'triangle', a piece of iron used to hitch horses to the plough. 'The ante-bellum negro often suspended this by a string, and beat it with its pin along with the playing on "quills" (a kind of pan-pipes), much after the order that a drum is beaten.' And on the rhythmic side the summary is: 'Negro folk rhymes, with very few exceptions, are poetry in which a music measure is the unit of measurement for the words rather than the poetic foot'.

From America we glance to India to see whether a new type has arisen there. The indigenous religions had not developed any congregational song, but there were lyrics both in Tamil, Sanskrit, and the northern vernaculars. A Scottish Jesuit sought very early to write a Christian poem, but this was rather epic. And only at the advent of modern missionaries was a serious attempt made to build on native foundations. Fountain took down a native air, and a convert wrote to it a Christian hymn, thus naturally repeating the successful methods of Arius and Luther. The characteristic is that the burden or refrain comes first, then the soloist gives a verse of the hymn, then the chorus repeats the refrain, and so on. There was no harmony, and it is amusing to see that as soon as Englishmen saw the tune and the words, they proceeded to fit it with a descant above and a bass below, and to write fresh words. A very popular hymn in Bengal has been rendered into English, where the burden is:

Jesus only, none beside, He 's the Saviour;
Jesus only, none beside.

Bengalis are encouraged to compose both words and music, and these are in print. An Oriya native has taken over familiar ballad tunes, and has written more than two hundred Christian hymns to them. So too in Assam, and among the Karens, while the seven-syllable line of Burmese poetry has been utilized for congregational song. Marathi poets have dedicated their gifts to Christ, but it is painful to find missionaries training them to sing American hymns in a weird pronunciation of English to American tunes accompanied on an American organ. Farther east, a

Chinese at Bangkok began native hymnody as early as 1808, while now in both China and Japan there are many native writers. Thus the whole course of European development is likely to be duplicated in Asia. It should be remembered that Eastern music is pentatonic, and can be readily played on the black keys of a piano. Few Western editors can resist dealing with the melody as they do with European plain-song, inserting other notes, adding harmonies, insisting on keeping time.

Perhaps it is the wide difference of Asiatic models that has hindered their Christian lyrics from being naturalized in Europe. The fact remains that barely a dozen Eastern hymns are known among us, except as curiosities.

CHAPTER XII

NEW POETIC INFLUENCES

Prepare, prepare the iron helm of war,
Bring forth the lots, cast in the spacious orb:
The angel of fate turns them with mighty hands,
And casts them out upon the darken'd earth!
Prepare, prepare.

Prepare your hearts for Death's cold hand! prepare
Your souls for flight, your bodies for the earth;
Prepare your arms for glorious victory!
Prepare your eyes to meet a holy God!
Prepare, prepare.

BLAKE.

CHAPTER XII

NEW POETIC INFLUENCES

TOWARDS the end of the eighteenth century, a new taste in literature became evident: the simple popular ballad obtained fresh recognition in polite circles; and the romantic school arose. These two considerations had an effect on hymnody.

First as to the ballad-measure.¹ The Scotch tunes published soon after the union of the two kingdoms, prompted D'Urfey to issue his *Pills to Purge Melancholy* for actual singing in 1719. Four years later a large collection of old ballads was printed for reading. Such influences account for Henry Carey's:

Of all the girls that are so smart,
There 's none like pretty Sally,
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

and for David Mallet's *William and Margaret*:

'Twas at the silent solemn hour,
When night and morning meet;
In glided Margaret's grimly ghost,
And stood at William's feet.

Thomas Percy in Shropshire rescued from the fire a seventeenth-century MS. which was treated freely, and augmented, so producing the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* in 1765. This brought about a new

¹ G. Saintsbury, *Short History of English Literature*, p. 580.

creation, sometimes simply natural and unforced; this culminated with Burns, as for instance:

Who made the heart, 'tis He alone
Decidedly can try us;
He knows each chord, its various tone,
Each spring, its various bias:
Then at the balance let 's be mute,
We never can adjust it;
What 's done we partly may compute,
But know not what 's resisted.

Sometimes it was consciously national; a freer measure rings in Skinner's *Tullochgorum*:

There need na be sae great a phrase
Wi' dringing full Italian lays;
I wadna gie our ain strathspeys
For half a hundred score o' 'em.

The free ballad licence reappears in the *Ancient Mariner*:

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gush'd,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

It was in 1798 that Coleridge and Wordsworth issued the *Lyrical Ballads*, wherein they deliberately illustrated two complementary styles of poetic treatment. This heralded a new era, and writers of hymns could apply to their specific task the generic principles: 'The principal object proposed in these poems was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men . . . above all, tracing in them, truly but not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: chiefly,

so far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement'.

Walter Scott, having been fired by the Percy *Reliques*, after trying his hand at translations from the German, set himself to collect the Minstrelsy of the Border, which he began issuing in 1802. Three years later he appended to his *Lay of the Last Minstrel* a version of the old *Dies Irae*:

That day of wrath, that dreadful day.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge also went to Germany for inspiration, and finding a metrical paraphrase of the gospels by Ottfried, Englished a passage into blank verse:

There lives not on this ring of earth
A mortal that can sing her praise.
Mighty mother, virgin pure,
In the darkness and the night
For us she bore the heavenly Lord.

Such new strains of poetry were enough to call attention to the baldness of the average hymn. Newton had done something by his partnership with Cowper to show the possibility of wedding poetry and devotion, and at Bristol, Thomas Chatterton had published a hymn for Christmas:

Almighty Framer of the skies.

A Yorkshireman, trained at Bristol Baptist College, pondered over the phenomenon, and in 1805 John Foster issued his love-letters as essays, one of which was devoted to explain the aversion of men of taste to evangelical religion. Starting from the fact that a multitude of books exhibited 'the most subordinate materials that can be called thought, in language too grovelling to be called style', he analysed the causes,

'how it was possible for the noblest ideas that are known to the sublimest intelligences, the ideas of God, of providence, of eternity, to shine upon a serious human mind without imparting some small occasional degree of dignity to the strain of thought'. At last, then, the jejune theories of Watts were sharply challenged, and as Foster was widely read, there came to be responses of two different kinds. Poets made occasional experiments at hymns, men and women of devotion no longer clothed their thoughts in mere rhythmic prose.

Thomas Moore was prompted by Psalm 147 to write:

O Thou who dry'st the mourner's tear;

but as it came from one who had been publicly stigmatized as 'the most licentious of modern versifiers, and the most poetical of those who in our time have devoted their talents to the propagation of immorality', it was not likely to win the favour of religious congregations.

Wordsworth affected chiefly the sonnet form, and his series on church history affords magnificent reading; he did not venture into familiar hymn metres till 1830, when we find the *Romance of the Water Lily* closing with a wedding hymn:

Who shrinks not from alliance
Of evil with good powers.

Four years later he wrote a fine noon-day hymn for the labourer, which ought to find a place in Fellowship hymn-books:

Up to the throne of God is borne.

Though we do not find any direct contributions to hymnody by the professional poets, yet they did much to prompt others. William Wordsworth quickened his

younger brother Christopher, half a dozen of whose hymns have a vein of true poetry in them, which we hear in such a couplet as:

Ripened by His glorious sunshine
From the furrows of the grave.

James Grahame confined himself to blank verse in his *Biblical Pictures* and his *Sabbath Walks*. So, too, did Robert Pollok in his *Course of Time*; but the readers of his thirty editions would thenceforth look for hymns less arid. The demand was met by Kirke White in his evening hymn, with such touches as:

The Sun of holiness shall shine
In glory on our head;

and in his fragment, completed by another, and often weakened in its first line, which really was:

Much in sorrow, oft in woe.

Mrs. Hemans was avowedly inspired by Scott, and part of her poem on his funeral figures in hymnals as:

Lowly and solemn be Thy children's cry to Thee.

James Montgomery is yet another instance of the lay contributor, though he was a son of a Moravian manse. Trained in the Moravian school of Fulneck with all its tradition of song, he became in 1794 editor of the *Sheffield Iris*, which position he held till 1825. Among his many poetical works are four distinctly intended for congregational singing. How well he wrote may be seen in that a hundred of his hymns are still in use. They have been said to illustrate the close connection between a pure heart and a fine fancy. Our present point is that he was good alike in practice and theory; he had considered what were the elements of abiding poetry, and was twice invited to lecture on the subject

in London; and as one branch of his studies, he took the history of hymns.

The first response to this poetical movement was by John Curtis of the Broadmead choir, who in 1827 issued a 'Union Collection' of hymns and sacred odes, with the distinct avowal that he wished to disprove Johnson's dictum as to contemplative piety being in the nature of the case unpoetical. Although Curtis so far bowed to the old school as to offer his collection merely to supplement Watts, yet as he embodied hundreds of hymns, those who had weighed the words of John Foster would probably use the supplement much more than Watts himself. Many authors were drawn upon, hitherto not pressed into congregational service, the most exceptional was Krishnu Pal, the first convert in India. There were many 'varieties', not merely odes and poems, but single verses that could be memorized and sung without book at prayer-meetings—a fashion revived at the end of the century by evangelists from America. The Baptist custom that a hymn was to be considered primarily in relation to the sermon, was catered for by most elaborate indexes of scripture allusions and subjects. But the extremely small size of type damaged the circulation of the book.

London speedily followed the example, and in 1828 Groser and Haddon edited a New Selection, also to supplement Watts. To match it, there came out the *Psalmist* tune-book in 1837, introducing *Marlborough* and *Woolstanton*. A generation later came out *Psalms and Hymns*, again with elaborate indexes of texts and of homiletical subjects.

Baptist response to the new poetic influence was thus only partial and tardy. Nor were Congrega-

tionalists much more sensitive. They adhered largely to the plan of supplementing Watts; it was not remarkable with Burder in 1784, but it does seem rather conservative in 1833 when the new Union asked Josiah Conder to prepare a collection. Even in a revised form he drew on only about ninety authors, but his choice was much to the taste of his constituency, and a dozen hymns of his own have won favour in wider circles. In 1853 the Leeds ministers, including G. W. Conder, brought out another collection with the aid of George Rawson, a solicitor. This drew on about a hundred authors, gave versions of medieval Latin hymns, prose psalms pointed for chanting, and anthems. It leaped into popularity over the north, and held its own for the rest of the century. The Congregational Union countered with a larger book, one-third of which was Watts. But meantime Thomas Toke Lynch was encouraged to issue his *Hymns for Heart and Voice: the Rivulet*. On the one hand these were experimental, on the other they were poetic; but because they were not dogmatic a storm broke out which actually caused the omission of the autumn session of the Union in 1856. The official editors adopted none of his work. The work of Rawson was, however, so valued, that he was asked to help the Baptists in 1858 with *Psalms and Hymns*.

Supplements to both the Congregational books appeared in 1874;¹ then in 1887 the Union commissioned Dr. Barrett of Norwich to prepare another, of which a careful critic has said that it sets forth what is best in Congregationalism, 'in taste, catholic; in feeling, evangelical; in expression, scholarly; in doctrine, orthodox'. But the same critic deploras

¹ *Cong. Hist. Soc. Trans.*, IX, 125.

that it shows the beginnings of that painful bowdlerization of hymns that still continues. After Horder's books of 1884 and 1905, another official book appeared in 1916, drawing on hundreds of authors and translators, to provide for congregations of all schools.

While these writers and editors belonged to conventional religious circles, there were other circles wherein poetry was written for popular song. Gerald Griffin showed in his *Eileen Aroon* how akin Ireland can be to the Scottish *Robin Adair*. Ebenezer Elliott, the Corn-law Rhymmer, produced a 'People's Anthem' now to be found in many a hymnal, and also a poem on the 'Poor Man's Day', which has obviously inspired Professor Blackie:

Sabbath holy!
For the lowly
Paint with flowers thy glittering sod:
For affliction's sons and daughters
Bid thy mountains, woods, and waters
Pray to God—the Poor Man's God.

If he sang from Yorkshire, and Thomas Cooper the Chartist from Leicester, William Barnes could vary his learned lucubrations from his Dorset school with the homely

Since I do miss your vaice an' feâce
In praÿer at eventide,
I 'll praÿ wi' woone sad vaice vor greâce
To goo where you do bide;
Above the tree an' bough, my love,
Where you be gone avore,
An' be a-waitèn vor me now,
To come vor evermwore.

Hawker's *Song of the Western Men*, Dobell's *Keith of Ravelston*, the *Ballad of Marjorie*, Kendall's *Orara*, show the same spirit working in widely different parts.

Beside the literary movements, religious and secular, there was a musical, aided by the romantic movement in Germany. Thus Andreas Romberg, known most widely as the author of a Toy Symphony, wrote the tune *Kiel*, named after the Danish university that gave him his doctorate. Knecht of Stuttgart seems to have become known by his tunes *St. Mildred* and *Vienna*. Edward Miller of Doncaster published in 1790 his *Psalms of David*, including a variation of an older tune which he christened after the premier, *Rockingham*. His son, W. E. Miller of Sheffield, did for Dissent what the father had done for Anglicans, when in 1805 he issued two distinct books, one for use among Methodists, whom he had joined, the other for the worshipper of Watts. He vigorously opposed both trashy importations from America and the frivolous style of recent English music. Among the hundreds of new tunes he thus published, is *Byzantium*, by Thomas Jackson of Newark, though those written by better known musicians whom he enlisted seem to have passed out of use. The old style found numerous village enthusiasts. Leach, the violinist of Wardle, published in 1789 and 1797, and greatly affected Methodist song in Lancashire, supporting himself as teacher of music in Rochdale and Manchester. His tunes are still popular, but London editors will no longer print them.

Anton Rädiger taught at Chatham, and published in 1790. His *Praise* is a fine example of the way in which different parts were utilized by the device of repeating the words. Samuel Stanley, the 'cellist of Birmingham, not only led at Carr's Lane and then at Ebenezer, but twice published a score of tunes; his *Warwick* and *Calvary* show the same bold runs. Of the

same type is *Eaton*, by Zerubbabel Wyvill of Maidenhead in 1802. Isaac Tucker, leader in the Baptist chapel at *Westbury Leigh*, has been ungratefully treated, for the tune of that name is no longer reprinted, though his most popular *Devizes* has recently been revived. And the same fate has befallen *Burnham*, composed in 1805 by that Thomas Clark of Canterbury who afterwards edited the *Sacred Gleaner*, and in 1827 for the Sunday School Union the *Union Tune Book*, which was perhaps the latest popular collection of the old-style tunes. James Ellor of Droylsden next year was inspired to write *Diadem* for Perronet's hymn, and so well has it held its own that it has compelled recognition even in the new-style books. But as much cannot be said for *Euphony*, by Henry Dennis, violinist and farmer, of the Baptist church at Hugglescote.

Henry Allon of Islington was the pioneer of a more sober style for Congregational music. In 1852 at Union Chapel he instituted a psalmody class, led by his organist, Dr. H. J. Gauntlett. For this he published in 1858 the *Congregational Psalmist* with more than three hundred tunes, avowedly to 'supersede the inferior and worthless tunes of the preceding century' by reviving psalter tunes, naturalizing German chorales and French tunes, and editing ancient Latin melodies. To him we owe our knowledge of *Dresden*, a fine tune by J. A. P. Schulz (1747-1800), always now sung to a version of the harvest hymn by the Hamburg banker, Matthias Claudius, 'We plough the fields'. *Lübeck* is an older tune of 1537; *Ratisbon* a medieval litany; *Rutherford* much altered from the form in which Urhan, the operatic violinist, wrote it for *Chants Chrétiens* in 1834.

Within eight years Allon had sold 52,000 copies,

and he then distinctly prided himself on having led the way, so that though Anglicans had followed, he still had the largest and most catholic representation of the worship-song of the Holy Church, throughout the world. Later editions introduced compressed score, arrangements from works of the great masters, new copyright tunes, tunes to new hymns of fresh metres. And companion volumes of chants and anthems were issued, for congregational use, and not merely by choirs. A new era had set in.

Gauntlett himself had as much to do with this as Allon, but he was guided by different principles. At first he was an amateur in music, keenly interested in the reform of organ-building; but about 1842 he abandoned the law, and was created Mus. Doc. by Archbishop Howley. His next aim was the revivification of Gregorian music. He joined with W. J. Blew in issuing *The Church Hymns and Tune Book* from 1844, and here he laid down the principle that tunes were not to be fitted at random: that hymn and tune must be wedded indissolubly. As an instance of how little his principle is accepted, he composed *St. Alphege* to the words, 'The hymn of glory sing we'; the hymn is disused, but the tune is diverted to three Latin hymns and to three modern hymns. He also issued another book jointly with Kearns, and a third jointly with Waite, the great Nonconformist reformer, through whom he seems to have passed over to the more fruitful association with Allon.

While he was a keen lecturer, reviewer, critic, adapter, editor, he did an abundance of original work. He could deal with new metres from the German, as in *St. Albinus*; in more ordinary measures he showed equal originality, as is shown by *Dura*, *St. Bernard*,

St. Fulbert, St. George, Southwold, University College. Triumph and *Springfield* seem exceptional, but the latter began life as a sevens, and has had its slurs dissolved to fit longer lines.

Gauntlett, however purist in theory, used great freedom in dealing with the tunes that Allon chose, and Allon had expressly to explain what were their respective shares. Two instances will show the liberties taken by Gauntlett. Johann Scheffler, a Catholic priest, published some German hymns at Breslau in 1657 under the name *Angelus Silesius*; G. Josephi wrote tunes to them. Gauntlett took a line and a half of one and based a new tune on it, which under the name of *Angelus* is deservedly popular. Again in 1842 a collection of Silesian folk-songs was published and obtained wider currency; one of these was heard by an English tourist in Westphalia, and published by him in the *Evangelical Magazine* for 1850 with the grave assurance that it was a Crusader's Melody. Dr. Gauntlett slightly remodelled it, and issued it as *Ascalon*, under which name it supplanted the old English tune *Dalston* to the same hymn of Watts, 'How pleased and blest was I'. The change was doubtless aided by the fact that the first two lines have exactly the same melody. Another experiment in folk-song was more remarkable, for in taking over *Ballerma* from the Spanish, Allon had really tapped a Moorish and Arab source, written in the Eastern pentatonic scale, a fact which facilitated its export to China by a mission late last century.

CHAPTER XIII

ANGLICAN HYMNODY

The Catholic Creeds, and the Lord's Prayer, presenting in their simplest forms, and in their natural order, all the fundamental points of Christianity, both objective and subjective, appeared to the Editor to be the best basis for a classification of those hymns of faith and devotion, which express feelings at all times appropriate to a Christian profession.

ROUNDELL PALMER.

CHAPTER XIII

ANGLICAN HYMNODY

THE Church of England for many years did not use hymns for the congregation: anthems for choirs and psalms for the people provided the staple. But with the nineteenth century this exclusiveness began to weaken. The impulse came partly from the romantic school of poetry, partly from the devotional school of religion.

Reginald Heber wrote a prize poem on Palestine, which was improved by the criticism of Walter Scott. When he settled in the rectory of Hodnet, he began publishing hymns in the *Christian Observer*, avowedly to raise the service of song from the profanity and fanaticism with which it had been polluted. He adapted the Baptist plan of writing the hymns for the occasion; thus for a missionary sermon in 1819, he wrote the magnificent

From Greenland's icy mountains.

But as a rule, the epistle and gospel for the day suggested both the sermon and the hymn. Perfectly conscious of the value of hymns among Dissenters, he tried to gain episcopal approval for his MS. collection in 1820, but failed. Only in 1827, after his death, as Bishop of Calcutta, were his hymns printed along with some by Milman, and issued as one of a series of poetical books. This gave them vogue in a circle

not primarily religious, while their own devotion found them a ready welcome for actual worship.

In that same year appeared the *Christian Year* of Keble. His title showed that he held fast to the ecclesiastical traditions, and that as dates came round, he would offer a suitable hymn. This was the ancient practice, but to Englishmen it came as a novelty, despite the meagre survival of a few hymns appended to the psalter. As Anglicans learned to look abroad, Newman was attracted by the Roman Breviary and translated ten hymns which went into No. 75 of the *Tracts for the Times*. Another member of the same school found out the Parisian Breviary, and rendered many of its hymns, ignorant as yet that they dated only from 1736, and were written deliberately to supplant the more ancient hymns. The next trial was with the Roman Breviary of 1632, but this again had expressly discarded the venerable medieval hymns.

Meanwhile, Roman Catholic musicians were doing a little that touched the national life. At the Sardinian chapel near Lincoln's Inn Fields—rebuilt to-day and appropriately dedicated to St. Cecilia—the organist was Samuel Webbe, to whom we owe *St. Werburgh* and *Benevento*. He was a writer of capital glees, and in 1792 published a collection of motets, whence we derive *Corinth* and *Melcombe*. When Newman and Faber joined this communion, they further enriched its hymnody, though their strains are often too luscious for Protestant use. It seems natural that Faber should have attached himself to the Oratory of Philip Neri, whose services to music have already been spoken of.

There were other Anglicans, who remained in their ancestral communion, equally touched with the spirit

of the past. In 1837 John Chandler, vicar of Witley, published *Hymns of the Primitive Church*, now first collected, translated, and arranged, including such versions as

Christ is our corner-stone,

O Jesu, Lord of heavenly grace.

A few other attempts at exploration revealed the need for a better understanding of past history, especially the history of music, and some of the reformers put forth a clear programme. Arguing from ancient medieval specimens, they pleaded for unison singing only, within moderate compass, in direct opposition to the simultaneous movement among Non-conformists for part-singing, led by Waite and Curwen. They broke away from Gregorian precedent, asking for well-marked melody, and strict common time. Many tune-books were issued, of which two by the Rev. W. H. Havergal are typical; he re-edited Ravenscroft's Psalter with its pseudo-historical classification, then in 1847 published *Old Church Psalmody* which ran to five editions. The difficulties of the reformers are illustrated by the fact that Havergal's own parishes in Worcestershire would not follow his lead. He wrote original tunes on the same models, of which *Evan* and *St. John* are well known; and here again he was balked, for *Evan* has been printed in triple time by later editors, in the teeth of his principles. The Society for Promoting Parish Music published the *Parish Choir* from 1846 to 1849, and in its pages, which chiefly contained old tunes revived, appeared a revision of a tune by Joseph Smith of Halesowen, set to a hymn for Innocent's Day; under the name *Innocents* it has become widely popular. It is apparently in

the process of reviving the old psalter tunes, that No. 22 of Andro Hart's Psalter had to be named, and was called *London New* though it was a much older tune than Croft's *London*.

Charles Steggall, pupil of the Royal Academy of Music, published a volume of *Church Psalmody* in 1849, and as organist at two important London churches was able to effect real improvement. A specimen of his work was to the old 148th metre, *Christchurch*: it is a sign of the limited influence of Gauntlett's new school, insisting on the appropriate wedding of hymns and tunes, that while in Anglican circles it is used to a modern hymn in antique style with a refrain, in the Free Churches it is more familiar to a version of a Latin hymn.

Two important books appeared in 1854. One was by W. Mercer, a *Church Psalter and Hymn Book*, of which the musical editor was John Goss, organist of St. Paul's; the music gave chiefly the old psalm-tunes and some German chorales, such as *Upsal*, an adaptation of Cruger's *Evening Hymn*. His own cathedral style comes out well in the ornate setting of Lyte's hymn, *Praise my soul*. The other was a different style of book, edited by T. Maurice, containing chiefly new tunes to certain hymns, and entitled *Choral Harmony*. This drew upon many sources, for P. Maurice edited a German chorale into *Watford*; Paul La Trobe the younger contributed *Fairfield*, whose name commemorates the Moravian settlement near Manchester; Sterndale Bennett, the Bach enthusiast, gave *Russell Place*; *Datchet*, an amphibrach of eleven syllables to the line, came from George J. Elvey. He was organist of *St. George's Windsor*, and so named a tune which he published in 1858 for 'Hark the song of jubilee'.

John Mason Neale was a leader of the Ecclesiological Society, and from his Sackville College in East Grinstead produced the *Hymnal Noted* in 1852, with two more editions. Perhaps he had been inspired by Samuel Webbe; certainly his proposals were to fall back entirely on medieval song such as *Veni Emmanuel*, and on those lines Pusey translated from the *Salisbury Hymn Book* 'Lord of our life'. It is misleading that the tune often wedded to this hymn bears a Latin name, *Integer Vitae*, for it is only derived from a German setting of Horace's ode.

A. R. Reinagle was organist in Oxford at the Church of *St. Peter*, which provided a name for a most useful common metre. Another German, Melchior Teschner, was drawn upon for the splendid tune to 'All glory, laud, and honour', Neale's version of *Theodulph's* hymn; the tune was named after that saint. And Havergal adopted *Swabia* from a Heidelberg collection of 1745.

German influence was brought in through another channel. Catherine Winkworth discovered at Dresden the wealth of Lutheran hymnody. The Chevalier Bunsen published in 1833 a collection of nine hundred hymns; eight years later he negotiated a Prusso-English bishopric in Jerusalem; both events showed his desire to draw together all Evangelicals. Miss Winkworth chose some hundred of his hymns, and in 1855 issued translations as *Lyra Germanica*, again with the desire to bring to the front the deep and true communion of saints in different churches and lands. She did, however, fall in with the Oxford arrangement according to the ecclesiastical year. The pedestrian style of English psalmody is evident, in that she felt it necessary to apologize for the variety of

metre she found and imitated, and to insist that continental worship consisted largely of congregational singing.

The Evangelical clergy did not appreciate the new Anglo-Catholic movement or its hymnody, and they found poets to continue and enlarge their tradition, of whom Dean Alford, Charlotte Elliott, and F. R. Havergal have proved the most lasting, and are widely used outside their own communion. Two or three eclectic books were used by this school.

So evident was the drift apart, that the S.P.C.K. issued *Church Hymns* in 1852, with the hope that to this well-established society all would rally. But unofficial enterprise has proved more successful. For out of the welter of competing books, Sir H. W. Baker, vicar of Monkland, in 1861 produced one edited and owned by a group of High-Churchmen, who entitled it *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. It is no small testimony to the power of song that they dared not discard some by Lutherans, and even by Dissenters. The promoters secured a fine musical editor in W. H. Monk, whose choice and settings made the book popular far outside their own school. It is amusing to see that Dykes's tune *Nicaea*, with a Catholic flavour about its name, was styled by Gauntlett, *Monkland*, for use among Congregationalists; the compliment to the editor personally would hardly be acceptable when his principles were so opposed. Within fifty years it was revised three or four times and the owners had sold sixty million copies; now perhaps more than three-fourths of all Anglican churches use it. Yet the musical treatment did not win general assent. Thomas Hardy, who had known as a boy an old psalm-tune, apostrophized it at a later meeting:

Stripped of some of your old vesture
By Monk, or another. Now you wore no frill,
And at first you startled me. But I know you still,
Though I missed the minim's waver,
And the dotted quaver.

The owners of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* were for long very conservative with their copyrights, so that Nonconformists either did not know their hymns and tunes, or they used the book itself within the family circle, which thus became leavened with the sacerdotal doctrine of the book as a whole, with the idea of an ecclesiastical year, with the cycle of the Prayer Book.

Musicians were led to consecrate their gifts. William Boyd composed a tune to 'Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire', for a Whitsuntide service among Yorkshire colliers: his *Pentecost* at once established itself in the north. In 1868 he joined with other Oxonians in publishing *Thirty-two Hymn Tunes*, whence Sullivan transferred it to a later edition of *Church Hymns*, but wedded it to 'Fight the good fight'. This is an instance that might be easily paralleled: Dykes and Barnby also re-harmonized, restored, divorced, and re-married old tunes, besides producing new compositions. Of other leading books, the *Hymnal Companion* appeals to the Evangelicals, the *Hymnal Noted* and the *Hymnary* to the Anglo-Catholics, while the literary tradition is represented in the *English Hymnal*.

Neale did two more services to hymnody. From the old Latin Church he looked to the Greek, especially the writers of Jerusalem, Sicily, and Constantinople for three hundred years after the rise of Islam. There he found a wealth of song, and though the themes chosen, the treatment, the metre, were all strange, yet they suggested English hymns, which he modestly

credited to those who inspired him. It was in 1862 that he succeeded in drawing attention to this new source. He never looked farther east to Persia or mined the wealth of hymns in Syria; but his explorations of Greek sources have been followed up, especially by the Presbyterian Brownlie.

The other service was to guide an enthusiast in the study of hymns. Daniel Sedgwick was a self-taught Baptist bookseller, who specialized in hymn-books, and built up a library with whose help he became an expert consulted for a quarter of a century by all editors. Not only did he reprint rare collections from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but he inspired many other students so that they appealed both to literary and to devotional circles.

In 1862 there was a contribution of great importance, from an unexpected quarter, Sir Roundell Palmer, the Solicitor-General. He was deeply interested in ecclesiastical matters, and had sought to succeed Keble as professor of poetry. He had been in consultation with Sedgwick, and he decided to issue a *Book of Praise* from the best English writers of hymns. He brought to his labours principles familiar in university circles, and aimed at the restoration of original texts, at discovery of original authors. With artistic instinct, he saw that 'the constant enthusiastic contemplation of a few subjects, dear to the universal heart of Christendom, and embodying the highest conceptions of Divine purity and beauty, produced a simplicity, refinement, and spirituality of style, which never tires, notwithstanding its limited range'. With deep religious feeling he recognized that Christian hymnody binds 'together by the force of a central attraction, more powerful than all causes of difference, times

ancient and modern, nations of various race and language, Churchmen and Nonconformists, Churches reformed and unreformed'.

To-day Anglicans are no longer behind others in their use of hymns, and the stately cathedral services by paid choirs do not stand alone. Indeed, these were losing their appeal to the people generally. Deeply as Henry Esmond may have been moved at Winchester, yet Dickens describes the singing men of Cloisterham in the nineteenth century in terms which show how little devotion they could express or kindle: 'In the famous anthem, Wesley's "Wilderness", a falsetto blossomed as the rose in such a timid voice, that the bass, who was the next to get going, exhorted him in stentorian tones to be strong and fear not, which covered the falsetto with confusion. After six lines of recitative, the full choir let themselves go in a mad fugue in which every voice tumbled over every other voice, and the Decani side tried in vain to drown the Cantoris, and only succeeded in being put out of the fray by the bass, who drowned the lot of them, and defied the organist to drown him, although that gentleman was pounding away with both feet at once, both hands, and every one of the stops shooting in and out like buffers on a steam-engine'.

On the other hand, nearly every non-Anglican book shows hymns supplemented by prose chants and by anthems; and thanks to Dr. Allon, the congregations are encouraged to sing these. A bishop who in a large assembly of Nonconformists had deplored their indifference to historic Christianity, gained a new light when the whole body responded to the call of the conductor of the small choir, and without notice or book sang the Te Deum to a setting by the master of

the choristers at Exeter Cathedral one hundred and fifty years before.

Representative books at the end of last century are the Presbyterian *Church Praise* of 1882, the Congregational *Church Hymnal* of 1887, the Primitive Methodist of 1912, the Scotch *Church Hymnary* of 1898, the *Baptist Church Hymnal* of 1900. For some of these, musicians like Rimbault, Stainer, Hopkins, Bridge were employed, others preferred less known men. But it may well be said that the last generation has seen a flowing together of two streams which had too long remained apart, and that except for the intoning of the prayer-book services, the musical worship in all churches is tending to one rich and varied type, wherein the whole congregation has its part.

CHAPTER XIV

LATER DEVELOPMENTS

Although the music proper to the Church is purely vocal, music with the accompaniment of the organ is also permitted. . . . It is forbidden to sing anything whatever in the vernacular in solemn liturgical functions.

PIUS X, 1903.

To the Presbyterian, the hymn-book, with the Psalter, occupies the place of a liturgy. It gives him the only means he has of letting his voice be heard in the offices of public worship.

MILLAR PATRICK, 1927.

Hymn-singing needs to be natural, unforced, and full of life. It should be the most vital experience of which a school, or college, or any assembly is capable.

WALFORD DAVIS, 1923.

CHAPTER XIV

LATER DEVELOPMENTS

THREE movements influenced congregational singing after 1840; the teaching of song in day-schools, the coming of American singing evangelists, the rise of brotherhoods and sisterhoods. These gave rise to new types of hymn-books, which deeply modified the standard books for Sunday.

Popular education in song was a passion with Joseph Mainzer, who, after fine work in Paris, came to Edinburgh, then settled in Manchester. He published *Singing for the Million*, and began a periodical still known as the *Musical Times*. His work at Paris attracted John Hullah, who found there a great system of teaching by Wilhem. Hullah acclimatized this in England, training students at Battersea College, where the pupil-teacher system dovetailed with his method, and developing a new school at Exeter Hall; in twenty years about 25,000 people passed through his classes. Unhappily he brought over one French peculiarity, the fixed Doh. Against this innovation the cudgels were taken up by John Curwen, a Nonconformist minister, in favour of the old sol-fa notation. Though this had not been in print since Joseph Hall's *Psalms* of 1607, it had been remembered and used; Addison mentioned that milk was generally sold in London by a street-vendor 'in a note above E-la'. Miss Glover of Norwich had recently revived it, and her 'Modulator' soon became familiar; a Tonic-Solfa College was

established, and in fifteen years certified over a quarter of a million pupils. The result was that instead of music being learned entirely by ear, it was acquired also by eye, and the power to read at sight became more common than ever before. Since Elizabethan days, there had never been a time when music was more popular. Not only hymn-tunes, but anthems, part-songs, oratorios, are now printed in this style, and nearly every congregation will have some ordinary members using a book in this notation.

Song-books were soon compiled, and these contained some religious verse. An obvious next step was to provide special hymn-books for the use of children; and Sunday schools led the way. But early selections were made by people who did not understand the child mind, and invited schools to sing:

Soon will our earthly race be run
Our mortal frame decay;
Children and teachers, one by one,
Must droop and pass away.

This was a common line of thought:

Youth on length of days presuming
Who the paths of pleasure tread,
View the leaves, so lately blooming,
Numbered now among the dead.

And another author invited children to sing to their 'patrons':

Why were not our infant bodies
Sacrificed to gods of stone?
Or, unpitied, doomed to suffer
Under Moloch's cruel throne?

From such education into an unreal religion, there was rescue by Jane Taylor and others; and women naturally found their ministry of song acceptable here.

The Sunday School Union arranged deliberately and entirely for children. The first venture was the *Sunday School Hymn Book* with tunes, yet this still included whole sections devoted to Invitations and Warnings, Moral Duties, Life, Death, and Eternity. In 1905 this was superseded by the *Sunday School Hymnary*, which excluded hymns of mere sentiment and of doctrine, aiming at building up of character by hymns that could be sung sincerely, of which more than six hundred were included. For another stage of experience, the Christian Endeavour Union provided another hymnal with above five hundred hymns for young people in their teens and twenties.

The sources of the music for children are even more varied than usual. When the Wesleyans put out their first school tune-book in 1854, they incorporated a folk-song used for a round game, naming it *Coventry*. It was edited by Hemy in his *Crown of Jesus*, named there *Stella* after the Durham village where he heard it, and by this channel it passed into general use. Again, George Herbert composed a Kyrie which was used by Claribel for her song 'Children's Voices', and it figures in some metrical litanies as *Agape*. A song by an Irish lady is known as *Goshen*.

The extent of this new provision for children may be gauged by the fact that the Sunday School Union is indebted to more than a hundred authors for copyright hymns, and to still more composers for copyright tunes. Every year prizes are offered for new tunes to be sung at the Whitsun festivals in the north.

Day-schools also have tried to cater for child song, even for the religious section. Two or three collections have been compiled for the purpose, but a shock is experienced at finding that one editor expects boys

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and girls to be weary, languid, and sore distressed; or that they feel the eventide of death falling fast. A far more sensible collection is published by Novello, and in a third may be found such a prayer as

Grant us the gifts that we need in our labours,
Minds that are eager to seek for the True,
Keen to perceive it and strong to embrace it,
Wills that are patient and valiant to do.

From the special children's book, there has been a reaction back upon ordinary congregational books. To prevent divorce between the young and their elders, part of at least one service on Sunday is now usually devoted to the children: so in the newest hymnals many pieces are chosen for them, together with metrical litanies and special arrangements, and even a few anthems. Yet the intense love of the ordinary man for taking his own share will occasionally give the spectacle of greybeards ecstatically chanting,

We are but little children weak!

Soon after 1870 Britain had a splendid experience of American revivalism and song at their best. One convert, who has since won to a foremost place, testifies after fifty years that Sankey's solo singing made a profound impression. Rhymesters were accustomed to compose topical ballads which they sang in the street, selling broadsheet copies: at Birmingham the chorus of one such ditty ran:

So the rich and the poor and the young and the old
Give up thinking of pleasure, of dresses, of gold,
But rush off each night to hear and behold
The wonderful Moody and Sankey.

Nearly every factory in the city echoed with the songs and solos, and there was an enormous sale of

both words and music. Since then, other singing evangelists have brought over more songs, generally ephemeral; and more books have been issued. Successive editions show how the exuberance of Pennsylvania and Tennessee have had to compromise with England which insists on its standard hymns, and with Scotland which demands its psalms and paraphrases. From the new style of words and music some have been culled with promise of permanence, despite the difficulties of copyright. Another branch from the same stem is *Hymns of Consecration and Faith*, representing a type of revival associated with the conventions at Mildmay and Keswick.

American revivalists have popularized mass singing. Audiences have been taught new hymns and new tunes, have been trained in chorus work and in responsive song. The particular hymns and tunes learned have often been discarded in a year, but the confidence gained in trying unfamiliar music, and the readiness to learn new words, have been permanent gains. Where such novelties have been followed up, it is found that the way has been prepared for music more ambitious than that of simple hymn-tunes. Chants and anthems, such as have long characterized the worship of the Established Church, are now to be heard frequently. And thanks to the revival of music in school and at home, these are not relegated to choirs, but are shared by whole congregations.

Special attempts have been made to reach men, by Adult Schools, by Pleasant Sunday Afternoons. For these, hymns of a virile kind were needed, dealing also with fresh topics, especially social. This led to the production of a *Fellowship Hymnal*, which added to above three hundred other hymns twenty-five written

for the new movement. The first seven in the new book are by the son of an ironfounder, an American Jew, a canon of St. Paul's, a Friend, a man of letters, an American Unitarian, an Australian civil servant. All members of the Church, not officers alone, are seen here taking their part in providing for its worship. The Brotherhood movement caused another revival, of orchestral accompaniment. This obliges us to look backwards.

The nineteenth century saw in many parts a three-cornered contest between congregation, players, organist, and choir. There were many who felt what Richard Wagner said: 'To the human voice, the immediate vehicle of the sacred word, belongs the first place in the churches.'¹ But there were others who could not sing, and could play; these wished to dedicate their talent to the service of God. About 1835 many a rural parish church would have in its west gallery the music-men with viol, book, and bow; in Derbyshire these survived at least into the seventies, even though the tendency was to limit them to the three great festivals. But the influence of cathedrals and of rich benefactors suggested the use of organs, against which many objections were raised. Scotland had a long-standing tradition against the 'kist of whistles'. The orchestra saw instinctively that one stately instrument, making more volume and variety of sound than they could unitedly, would gradually displace them. In many quarters the fear was entertained that paid performers, without any sense of vital religion, might oust or rule those who desired to worship in song. Instances of the problem abound in all parts.

The prerogative of the deacon to give out the hymns

¹ *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, X, 651.

and to lead the singing was the custom at the Metropolitan Tabernacle till lately, and is still maintained in an important chapel at Brighton. A Bacup pastor preached that a select body of singers might be lawful, but no further useful than as they assisted the congregation. 'Singing cannot, any more than praying, be done by proxy; every man must discharge his own duty.' When a singing pew was instituted, strict discipline was maintained: in 1826 a church in Bucks declined to admit thereto persons of light and unsteady character, and a deacon was appointed to issue tickets to the singing gallery. At a Lancashire church one choir did go on strike, and received a severe lesson by finding a new set of church-members fill the gallery at once, to their own permanent exclusion. Members felt at home in their Father's house, and long continued to sit as they sang, generally continuing this family attitude at the Lord's Table, even now. Similar discipline was long maintained over the instrumentalists, while their activities greatly interested the children, who in youth wondered whether the violin were the daughter of the bass viol, then were fired with an ambition that attached them to the place. The proposal to introduce an organ perturbed many congregations; in 1873 a wealthy church in north London, with stately building and cultured minister, was gravely troubled by a proposal to aid the leader of song by a small organ. A similar proposal in the north caused one conservative to stigmatize the machine as 'Baal, the idol of the Philistines', and when Baal was enthroned, to walk out of chapel at every hymn till the idol's voice was silent, and he could return to worship in spirit. Hardy tells of a tragedy in Wessex, where deacons in the fifties appreciated an organ,

but appreciated the good name of the church even more: his poem enshrines the names of the tunes all loved: *Old Hundred*, *Saint Stephen's*, *Mount Zion*, *New Sabbath*, *Miles Lane*, *Holy Rest*, *Arabia*, and *Eaton*. Such opposition came to a head among Methodists at Leeds, and disrupted the Connection, a trouble only just healed.

A way out of the difficulty was found by the improvement of a simpler keyed instrument, which could be played by the amateur church-member. The harmonium emerged about 1840, the still easier American organ a generation later. These can be played, after a fashion, by any one who has learned the piano, so that paid professionals are not needed. The frank adoption of the piano is still rare, though its use in day-schools shows its value for rhythm.

The enthusiasm and devotion of instrumentalists has found another outlet, thanks largely to the Salvation Army's enterprise. While the standard service of song is now usually supported on a keyed instrument, fresh forms of worship have arisen. Within doors, Pleasant Sunday Afternoons and other informal types have been glad to take the help of violinists or cornet-players; schools have seen the advantage of offering a variety of work to adolescent members. Out of doors, brass bands are of value for marches, and at selected pitches; while scouts and guides utilize their musical talent.

All these novelties have been reflected in the new books. Towards the end of last century, several ambitious editors desired to lead people forward, even at the expense of discarding much of the past. Successive editions of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* saw the modern hymns increasingly predominate: and it

was left to other editors to produce books with ancient music, even of the medieval plain-song. The editors of the *Baptist Church Hymnal* in 1900, basing their work on two favourite books, dropped a thousand out of sixteen hundred hymns, and added two hundred new by one hundred and twenty different authors. But in the choice of music the real usage was unknown, or defied; while two hundred standard tunes were printed, five hundred copyright were offered. This first experiment at a musical edition broke with a deep-seated tradition that religion was more important than knowledge, and if the two were not combined, the former was preferable. Methodists again chose a highly skilled musician without Methodist traditions.

In every case there was a revolt. The Methodists insisted on adding an appendix, for which their musical editor disclaimed responsibility; Baptists sent a formal protest, met by the reinstatement of many favourite tunes; the older editions of *Ancient and Modern* continued to be in demand, and the proprietors had to reprint them. Some recent students of hymnology seem so attracted by the new, that they have not observed the great conservatism of the people. Within the last six years there have been important illustrations of what congregations really will do, irrespective of the advice of musicians.

William Gadsby in 1814 published a selection of hymns, revised by his son in 1882, now widely used by the Strict and Particular Baptists, who have a choice of more than eleven hundred hymns. Though they are in thirty-six metres, all but common, short, and long are styled 'irregular', a remarkable sign of conservatism. In 1927 a *Companion Tune Book* appeared, of which a large edition was exhausted in a

few months, and a reprint was needed within the year. The committee, therefore, had gauged well the taste of the constituency, which believes in pure congregational song, with a minimum of support from any instrument. The aim was announced as being to include all the old favourites in general use, others which were less popular but still of merit, more recent compositions from other collections, and new tunes. Elaborate indexes connect it with the hymn-book. For the three regular metres, more than half the tunes are provided. Whereas some writers have fancied that 'repeats' are obsolescent, forty out of one hundred and ninety common present this feature, and twenty-four out of one hundred and sixty-seven longs.

Nor is it only in such circles that *Cranbrook*, *Diadem*, *Calcutta*, are in frequent use, book or no book. Be it noted that in the repetitions, one object may well be to vary the monotony of the regular metres; the usual device is to double the fourth line, but often the voices part company and sing antiphonally, or overlap. In older days a tune that split a line, and split it well for the first verse, produced curious effects with other verses. Thus on the one hand, Rädiger's tune *Athaliah* gives a really devotional effect:

See a poor sinner, dearest Lord
Whose soul, encouraged by Thy word,
At mercy's footstool would remain
And there would look,
And there would look, and look again.

But a recent writer remembers how words were sacrificed to the music: 'Those pathetic complaints of the shrill soprano, "O for a man", oft repeated, and then taken up by the more youthful seconds; next it is chirped by aesthetic tenors, and finally rolled off

by the stentorian basses. Grotesqueness reached its meridian, the music quietened down, and in unison was breathed the inoffensive orison, "O for a mansion in the skies!" Despite the ludicrous results, the writer declared that the memory 'lingers like the dying cadence of a sweet and sacred melody'.¹ Such peculiarities have been noted by Gadsby's editors, who offer only half a dozen tunes of this type. They have, however, retained some that are gloriously florid; Whitton's *New York* gives fifty-six notes to twenty-eight syllables; and this taste is not confined to the aged members, for *Old Langdon* is a copyright tune, apparently written by the owner of a bass voice, who spreads sixteen syllables over thirty-seven notes.

Many editors have prided themselves on the novelties they can present; and it may be that they seldom hear the remarks passed by leaders of choirs, and occupants of the pews. Publishers are beginning to realize that behind the conservatism of the masses is a real attachment to good religious music which has satisfied many generations. One firm advertises a volume 'standard for more than twenty years'.

The latest important sign of persistent taste may be seen in the 1933 revision of the *Baptist Church Hymnal*. From the eight hundred hymns, about a hundred and fifty have disappeared as not being in general use; and these are largely of the last century, while Watts still contributes thirty-one. Both nineteenth and twentieth centuries are represented in the substitutes, but it is quite noteworthy that eleven come from the Early and Middle Ages, twenty-two range from Luther to Wesley. On the musical side, composers and editors may take warning that more than a hundred

¹ R. J. V. Wylie, *Baptist Churches of Accrington*, p. 121.

modern tunes have been discarded, while even more old classics have been introduced afresh.

The wealth of such inheritance is indicated in the mere names. *Franconia*, *Silesia*, and a *Dolomite Chant* remind us of our debt to Germany; *Bayeux*, *Rouen*, and others tell how Huguenots have influenced our song; *Old Forty-Fourth* and *Old Hundred-and-Twentieth* recall the proper tunes of the Elizabethan Metrical Psalter; *David's Harp* and *Mount Ephraim* illustrate the Biblical studies of early Dissent; *St. Columba*, *London-derry Air*, *Kilmarnock*, pay a tribute to sister nations; *Hafodwen*, *Aberystwyth*, *Hyfrydol*, are but a few that come from the Principality. English music ranges from *Southport* in *Lancashire* to *Lewes* in the south; from *Farningham* of Kent to *Truro* of Cornwall; while *Philadelphia*, *Savannah*, *Niagara*, bring strains from across the Atlantic, as far west as *Arizona*.

These instances of attachment to the treasures of the past, may be balanced by an outpouring of song among a people newly won for Christ. Forty years ago, the Lushai Hills in India teemed with bloody offerings at tiny altars; to-day these have largely disappeared. When we ask to what agency the change is due, and how the people now express their devotion, in each case the answer is, sacred song. At the beginning, gospel hymns were translated or composed by the missionaries, largely to Welsh or English melodies. For years these were a powerful evangelizing agency, on mountain-top and in valley, on village square and in jungle. But to-day the Lushai Church is producing its own hymns, constructed on its ancestral lines, and a delighted hearer has written down more than two hundred. It has also evolved its own sacred music, not bringing over old heathen tunes, but creating new Christian

melodies on the Lushai model. The Christians need no books, no instruments, no trained choirs: 'from the lips of babes and sucklings as from those of aged men and women', the strains well forth naturally as the bird-songs. Such a living experience illustrates in another land the theme of this book, the power of popular hymn-singing.

CHAPTER XV

RECENT THOUGHT AND TENDENCY IN CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

By Eric H. Thiman, Mus.D., F.R.C.O.

The Church delights to raise
Psalms, and hymns, and songs of praise.

J. MONTGOMERY.

CHAPTER XV

RECENT THOUGHT AND TENDENCY IN CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

By Eric H. Thiman, Mus.D., F.R.C.O.

THE discussion in the preceding chapters is concerned very largely with congregational singing, viewed from a historical aspect, and the subject may here, perhaps, be profitably continued from the standpoint of present-day usage, embracing many tendencies in our churches and chapels.

Undoubtedly the most important factor prevailing to-day is the change of taste of our congregations in the matter of hymn-tunes. It is perhaps little more than two decades ago that the revivalist type of tune, generally associated with the names Moody and Sankey, was extensively used in churches of practically all denominations, and a visitor to our churches to-day cannot fail to be struck by the fact that this kind of tune is, with a very few exceptions, almost non-existent. The weakness of these tunes lay not only in the frequently excessive sweetness of the harmonizations, but, a much more potent factor, in the rhythmic monotony of each line. It is no uncommon thing for the rhythm of the first line, with its frequent reiterations of notes of shorter time-value, to be reproduced exactly in the succeeding lines, producing to a sensitive ear a feeling of monotony that has to be heard to be believed. Even a comparatively innocuous example,

such as the tune commonly sung to 'God be with you till we meet again' (by no means one of the worst of its type), which is one of a few survivors of this class, shows this characteristic in each of the four lines of the verse, and examination of an average Mission tune-book will show many more examples of a much greater blatancy. The fact that this kind of hymn-tune is rapidly becoming extinct (except among a very few sects) can be due to no other reason than a change of taste based on an improved musical outlook. The factors that have given birth to this change are perhaps two. First, the influence, difficult to over-estimate, of the singing class in our elementary and secondary schools, the musical material of which is based largely on the healthy influence of the national song and folk-song, in place of the mawkish, and often effeminate, ditty which tended to prevail twenty years or so ago; and this influence exerted in the schools, which are perhaps bound up in a greater degree with the Nonconformists than with any other denomination, cannot fail to have had some hand in the general improvement of taste. One has only to compare, for instance, the type of tune sung at Sunday School Anniversary services, with that sung only a few years ago, to realize that this school training is slowly but infallibly bearing fruit.

A second factor governing this change of taste is most probably the enlargement of musical experience provided by the wireless, the gramophone, and the healthy musical competition festival. It is a truism to say that it is only within the last few years that professional music-making, previously the prerogative of musicians only, has been extended to the average music-loving public, who are now aware, probably for the first time in musical history, of the

heritage of music left by the great composers. Such a knowledge cannot but fail to have an influence on the choice of tunes sung in church.

This unexpressed but none the less sincere desire for a healthier type of tune has resulted in the use of a large number of folk-songs being pressed into the service of the Church and Sunday school. Undoubtedly the folk-song cult can be carried too far; and all traditional melodies are not equally suitable, any more than all traditional melodies are equally good. But, taken in moderation, the influence is undoubtedly healthy, as it transfers the interest from the harmonic to the melodic, always an admirable thing in corporate singing by untrained bodies. Among the best of these tunes may be mentioned such examples as *Kingsfold*, *Coleshill*, *St. Columba*, *King's Lynn*, and *Monksgate*. With their dignified yet tuneful melodic lines, their instinctive feeling for climax, and their natural improvement consequent on their being handed down vocally from generation to generation, they are among the best and most suitable tunes possible for congregational singing.

In some quarters, too, an attempt has been made to revive the use of plain-song tunes. Admirable and indeed vocal as many of these tunes are, it will probably be found that the average congregation does not take very kindly to them. For one thing, in a world of measured music it is difficult to transfer the mind back to a period when time-signatures, bar-lines, and metrical accents were non-existent; and their modal feeling and lack of a definite tonality sound strange to a modern ear; and, perhaps most important of all, the fitting of the syllables, sometimes to one note, sometimes to a group of two or three, is embarrassingly

difficult to a congregation. The conclusion is inevitable that, broadly speaking, plain-song melodies are unsuitable for congregational singing. In their rightful place, from the cathedral choir-stalls, their austerity, dignity, and 'other-worldliness' can have a tremendously impressive effect, but they are not heard at their best when they are attempted by the average congregation.

There are, oddly enough, one or two plain-song tunes that have become surprisingly popular. Nearly all congregations love *Veni Emmanuel*, and *Jesu Redemptor* is frequently and successfully sung. The purist will, however, reply that these tunes, pressed willy-nilly into metrical forms, are mere grotesque perversions of the original plain-song, often harmonized with modern chords which are terrible anachronisms; and the statement would be perfectly true. Yet although they make successful tunes, they do not invalidate the argument above, for they are shorn of their medieval characteristics, and merely appear as ordinary hymn-tunes with a slightly wayward (and engaging) air.

A welcome feature of many modern hymn-books is the presence of Welsh melodies. Of this type, *Aberystwyth* has been popular for many years, and *Bryn Calfaria*, *Hyfrydol*, and *Ebenezer* are equally fine specimens. They have a certain melancholy that seems, for some strange reason, to appeal very strongly to English congregations. The musician often finds them a little monotonous (four of the eight lines of *Aberystwyth*, for instance, conclude with the same cadence), but unquestionably they are fine additions to our hymn-books. Perhaps the most noble of them all is *Hyfrydol*. With its dignified movement, its conjunct melody, and its superb climax, it is one of

the finest hymn-tunes ever written, and the effect of it, sung by a large congregation, is quite unforgettable.

One of the finest groups of tunes in our books is that formed from old French and Swiss melodies; but it is much to be regretted that in many books the engagingly varied rhythm of their original form has been perverted into a dull and lifeless succession of monotonous minims. Musicians rejoice to see that many modern hymn-books are now printing them in all their delightful rhythmic charm; they are not, in reality, any more difficult to sing thus than in the supposedly more 'practical' shape in which they made their appearance in older books. The appearance of the German chorale is another welcome feature of many modern books; for tunes such as *Ach Gott und Herr*, *Allein Gott*, *Es ist das Heil*, *Freu dich sehr*, and countless others are so valuable a contribution to psalmody that their exclusion from the majority of books in present use must be a mystery to many. It is to be hoped that this almost undiscovered mine of wealth may be before long made accessible to English congregations.

Although this chapter is concerned largely with general tendencies, specific mention of one or two books in which the features mentioned above are to be observed, can hardly be avoided at this stage. The book that perhaps of all others first showed the way to a healthier type of hymn and tune was the *English Hymnal* (1906). The features that are most immediately apparent therein are: the large number of traditional melodies, mainly of English origin; the use of plain-song tunes, restored to their correct form; the use of 'gathering-notes' (i.e. the first syllable of each line of a C.M. tune a semibreve instead of the more

usual minim); the restoration of French, Swiss, and German melodies to their original rhythm instead of their more usual arrangements in notes of equal value; the employment of many chorales in the beautiful harmonizations of Bach, and finally, the modern tunes, by many writers of note, among which may be mentioned *Sine Nomine* (by the musical editor, Dr. Vaughan Williams) to 'For All the Saints', one of the finest of all modern tunes.

The very wide use made in the Anglican Church of this admirable book shows how much it was needed, and the few minor criticisms of those who have used it and know it well, do not, to any great extent, affect its virtues. For instance, it is felt by many that the use of the old four-lined stave for the plain-song tunes seems to make them partake, to the average member of the congregation, rather of the nature of an esoteric cult; that some of the English traditional melodies are musically rather poor; and that the low pitch of most of the tunes, while suitable to the congregation, is extremely hard on the choir. To this last point, the supporters of the book would probably reply that it is primarily for congregations and not choirs; but while true enough, the remark would not be particularly helpful. Some of the problems raised by this point are discussed later: but meanwhile, both for what it is and for the influence it has had, the book can be described, without exaggeration, as epoch-making.

Songs of Praise (1925, enlarged edition 1931, Musical Editors, Martin Shaw and Vaughan Williams) exhibits many of the characteristics of the *English Hymnal*, with a rather larger proportion of modern tunes by well-known composers. The title of the book is

perhaps sufficient evidence of the fact that it is in some respects divergent from the average hymn-book, so far as words are concerned; for a considerable proportion of its contents must be considered sacred poetry rather than what is usually understood by the word 'hymn', and many of the modern composers whose work is represented therein have not hesitated to break almost completely away from the usual form and style of hymn-tune; and a practically clean sweep has been made of the many tunes which, although in some respects musically unworthy, are generally retained for sentiment's sake and which are treasured highly by the average congregation. For these reasons it is not, perhaps, a book that is likely to win the general favour; but for schools, colleges, and various communities of eclectic folk, nothing could be better.

Yet another book of very high standard that merits a few words of discussion, is the *Church Hymnary* (1898, revised 1930, Musical Editor, Dr. David Evans), perhaps even more generally useful than either of the above. The revised edition is particularly rich in carefully chosen folk-song, and in French and Swiss melodies, many of which are found in no other books. Some indication of the wide net cast by the editor and the great care taken to embrace everything worth while in church song may be given by mentioning that it includes such things as *St. Patrick's Breastplate* in Stanford's fine arrangement (which incidentally runs to eight pages in the book), Parry's *Jerusalem*, Tallis's *Canon* in its original canonic form, and many other fine and unusual features, which so far as we know are not met with elsewhere. Another admirable point is the presentation of the plain-song tunes, which are set in a somewhat simpler manner

than in the *English Hymnal*, and the use of faux-bourdon arrangements, the performance of which is discussed later. The book contains a few unworthy things, among which may be mentioned some of the modern Welsh tunes, but one is throughout conscious of the fact that no pains have been spared to make it an eminently practical book; and it has only to be more widely known to become one of the most favoured of all modern books among discriminating congregations.

That the change of taste mentioned at the beginning of this chapter is indeed in process of being is evident from a perusal of these books, representative of the general tendency away from the sentimentality and unhealthy sweetness prevailing during the closing years of the last century. Practically every modern hymn-book and every new edition now appearing contains many of the features discussed above in greater or less degree, and the progress made during the last decade is none the less welcome for being overdue. The Church to-day is more anxious than ever to attract the outsider; and it cannot possibly do so if it relies on tunes which the average music-loving member of the public, who knows something of folk-song, of Bach and Handel, of Beethoven and Brahms, feels instinctively (even if subconsciously) to be wrong, and unworthy of that highest level to which he knows church music should attain.

It may now perhaps be of interest to discuss some points in connection with modern usage in congregational singing. The four parts in which practically all our hymns are written might lead a complete stranger to assume that the congregation divides itself up into soprano, contralto, tenor, and bass, each person taking the part which he or she is best fitted to assume.

Any organist who takes the trouble to go and sit in the congregation during a service, leaving an assistant at the organ, will soon discover how fallacious such a view is. He will probably discover that forty per cent of the congregation are not making any verifiable noise at all; and out of the remaining sixty per cent thirty per cent are taking the melody line either at its rightful pitch or (if they are males) an octave below; ten per cent will be singing improvisatory harmonies of their own invention (generally called 'singing seconds'); and the remaining twenty per cent will perhaps be taking their rightful parts. Such a diversity of effort cannot possibly lead to the best results, and musicians who have given any thought to the matter at all are puzzled to know how to use this untrained body to the best advantage. Undoubtedly the finest effect of all is produced when the congregation sings a concluding verse in unison (or octaves, it as should more rightly be called) against a solid backing of organ tone. Yet continual and unvarying unison singing would be too monotonous, and those of the congregation who could read music and were accustomed to taking their own parts would naturally object. In obviation of this difficulty, there have been recently many efforts made to bring more variety to unison singing. Of these, two are increasing in popularity, and merit a few words of explanation.

The first and more usual is termed *descanting*. The congregation and the three lower parts in the choir sing the melody, and the sopranos of the choir sing an added and different melody above them.¹ The effect

¹ Where the tenor part of a hymn tune is of sufficient melodic interest, a simple and often effective descant can be made by the sopranos singing this part an octave higher.

when well done can be delightful and even exhilarating; yet it must be confessed that exceptional voices are needed to do the descant justice, if its inevitably high notes are to be taken without painful unpleasantnesses of tone. Then again, many descants, even sometimes those provided by skilled composers, often make very ugly clashes with the melody, which have the effect of disturbing and upsetting the congregation. As to the descant which is composed by the amateur organist, its effect is generally even more distracting; and it cannot be too strongly emphasized that the thing must be done properly, with carefully written descants and soprano voices of exceptional purity and strength, if it is to be done at all; and it is just here that the English Church, with its boys' voices, scores so heavily. Most members of Nonconformist congregations will probably admit that descants in their churches are frequently unsatisfactory, and indeed, often disturbing and unpleasant. Musically, however, there is nothing the matter with the idea: it is only the execution that is so often at fault.

The second plan has perhaps more to recommend it. It is termed 'faux bourdon' or 'faburden', and here the congregation, with the tenors, takes the melody as before, while the other three voices of the choir add a surrounding tissue by way of accompaniment. The practice is really an extension of the old idea of putting the tune in the tenor: the effect is generally delightful, and it is quite easy to perform. Verses so treated can be sung unaccompanied if desired, for the basses, altos, and sopranos of the choir provide the accompaniment to the unison singing of the congregation. As a variant of unison singing it has much to recommend it: the need for exceptional soprano

voices is not so pressing: the faux bourdon does not seem to disturb the congregation so much as does the descant; it provides a special part for all the choir and congregation, so that every one should be happy and occupied. Where the system has been tried it has nearly always been unexpectedly successful, and for those who wish to try it there are several published collections of popular hymns arranged in faux bourdon.¹

There is one further variety of congregational unison singing which is not explored as much as it might be; for not only is it easy of performance, needing no special parts or elaborate preparation, but it is in addition probably as old as religion itself; and it is strange that ministers and organists, knowing something of the method of singing the psalms employed in the temple at Jerusalem in pre-Christian times, do not make more use of the practice and possibilities of antiphonal singing. One sometimes hears hymns thus treated, with verses taken alternately by women's and by men's voices, to a tune such as *O Filii et Filiae* or *Veni Emmanuel*, which does not permit of harmony singing; and undeniably effective all will admit it to be, especially when the antiphonal verses are alternated with verses sung 'full'. But it is not generally realized that a most effective extension of this idea might be arranged by dividing the congregation up into, for instance, north gallery, south gallery, and transept, for succeeding verses, the whole congregation to take the first and last. Few organists will have heard this done, and many will probably have no conception of how thrilling the 'full' verses become when contrasted

¹ Geoffrey Shaw, *The Tenor Tune Book*; Eric Thiman, *Twenty Faux Bourdons to Popular Tunes* and others.

with the 'sectional' ones. So simple is the idea that one can only marvel that it has not been tried to any extent; and as for the initial arrangements, it would only be necessary for the minister when announcing the hymn to indicate the allocation of the verses; and in churches where a printed service paper is used, it could easily be printed thereon. There is that about antiphonal singing that seems to spur the congregation on to the best efforts possible; no doubt the natural feeling for emulation and competition is partly responsible; but there is in addition the fact that all parts of the congregation have a chance to rest their voices, with the result that when the turn of each section comes round, the allotted verse is attacked with freshness and enthusiasm. Be that as it may, the fact remains that where antiphonal singing has been tried, all are warmly in favour of it, and as a means of spurring on a lukewarm or lethargic congregation, there is no better method.¹

The addition of orchestral instruments to the organ accompaniment is an idea that is sometimes in the air nowadays. Much might be written on the question whether an organ is really the best medium for accompanying a large congregation. No doubt, organists will hold up their hands in horror at the suggestion; has not the organ been the immemorial accompaniment of the Church's religious song? Yet, while admitting all its virtues, its nobility, its austerity, and its volume, it is impossible to close an eye to its defects. Most organists are probably familiar with what happens in their churches as soon as they reduce the volume of their accompaniments: the congrega-

¹ One or two modern Sunday school hymn-books employ this device by giving various verses antiphonally to boys and girls.

tion drags, the music becomes listless, many stop singing altogether, and the general effect is nerveless and uninspiring. To combat this, many play loudly throughout a hymn in an endeavour to keep the congregation up to the mark; the required stimulus may be forthcoming, but only too often in violation of the mood of the words. No doubt many hymns are quite unsuitable, by virtue of this fact, for really good congregational singing, and this point will be touched on later. But the fact remains that the organ does not provide a rhythmic accompaniment, as does, for instance, a piano, or a quartet of brass. To say that the organ *can* be played rhythmically is beside the point; the truth is that it does not provide the rhythmic 'bite' which makes congregational singing, so to speak, 'come to life'; and there is no doubt that it is often vastly improved by the occasional addition of strings or brass. It is impossible to forget the stimulus that on one occasion was provided by a couple of trumpets that were left over from a performance of a Bach cantata in a church service, and used with the organ to accompany the final hymn. Even when these instruments were playing softly, the help it gave to the congregation was most noticeable, and in the final verse the singing became positively thrilling. One is not necessarily advocating Salvation Army methods in churches; but it is earnestly urged that the usual practice of thinking the organ the only possible accompaniment be given serious consideration; for when instruments in the hands of good players are available, the effect of a hymn of jubilant character can be immensely increased.

For outdoor services, indeed, nothing finer than a quartet of brass, say two trombones and two trumpets,

can possibly be found. One has often attended outdoor services where a large congregation has vainly been besought to sing to the accompaniment of a harmonium of Lilliputian dimensions, with the result that the greater part of the uplift of the service has been lost; whereas a small fee paid to professional musicians for their services in this matter would have been repaid tenfold. And those who think the suggestion that instruments be called upon to help the singing in church is unorthodox and monstrous, may be reminded that a century or more ago it was a universal practice in village churches; that abroad, in many cathedrals a full orchestra is habitually used on festival days; and that if Biblical sanction is required for the practice it may be found over and over again in the Old Testament, and unanswerably in Psalm 150:

Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet: praise Him with the psaltery and harp. . . . Praise Him with stringed instruments and organs: praise Him upon the loud cymbals: praise Him upon the high-sounding cymbals. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

A very welcome tendency nowadays is the introduction of congregational practices, and Nonconformists may well regret that here the English Church has got well ahead of them. It is obvious that, so to speak, to throw a new tune at the heads of the congregation during the service is not the best way of introducing it; but if the organist can get the people to stay after the evening service for the practice of new tunes, say once a month, the improvement in their singing is often noticeable. Sometimes the practice is held before service, and while this is, in the opinion of many, not so suitable a time (for it is often spoilt by late-comers entering and moving about), it has

something to recommend it, inasmuch as the congregation are led into the mood and spirit of singing before the service begins. At these practices, too, the organist can try over any devices he may be contemplating, such as descant, faux bourdon, and antiphonal singing, and thus ensure that the congregation will not be disturbed in a service by hearing something strange and new. As to the method of procedure, the most satisfactory is for the organist himself to conduct and to get a good assistant to accompany: personal touch with a congregation is essential if the practice is to be of any use. It may here be emphasized that it is essential for something new to be done every time: for obviously the congregation will not be attracted by a mere run through of hymns they have sung from childhood. It is here that the organist will, with the help of his choir, introduce new tunes, new methods of singing well-known hymns; try to get the congregation to sing softly in appropriate verses without dragging (a Herculean task this, as all will know who have tried it); spur the people on to their best efforts in broad unison verses, and generally pave the way for improved service singing.

Mention may be made here of the Hymn Festival Movement, which appears to have originated in Wales. It has been of great value in encouraging people to sing, in acquainting them with fine and unknown tunes, and in introducing the devices discussed above. Publishers have not been slow in bringing out small and cheap booklets of good and unfamiliar things,¹ both new and old, for this purpose, and in the hands

¹ *A British Hymn Festival Book* (edited by Martin Shaw); *A First Selection of Hymns and Tunes* (from *Hymns Ancient and Modern*); *The Hymn Tunes of Four Centuries* and many others.

of the right leaders the meetings can be most inspiring. English people are self-conscious about singing in public, and a great effort is generally necessary to get them to join in with spirit. Whereas they are often shy of lifting their voices in a church service, a practice or hymn-singing festival, held in circumstances freed from the restraint and the atmosphere which often prevail in the service, will frequently have surprisingly good results. The Hymn Festival Movement reached its highest point in the years immediately preceding the war; of late it has fallen somewhat into abeyance, and the time is undoubtedly ripe for a big revival.

A few subsidiary points that do not perhaps come quite into the subject of the development of congregational singing during the present century, but are, nevertheless, germane to the broader issues of the matter, may be touched on briefly by way of conclusion.

It was mentioned above that many hymns, indeed a large proportion of those found in our hymn-books, do not really lend themselves very satisfactorily to good congregational singing, and there are signs that there is at present a feeling in agreement with this; certainly the hymns now chosen in services often show that those in which a good melodic line gives encouragement to a congregation are increasingly favoured. Even so, there is often room for improvement, and there are many ministers, even to-day, who seem curiously insensitive to the fact that some hymns always go well, and some never. One who has been on friendly terms with some of them hopes that it may be stated, without giving offence, that ministers are far from always being the best judges of what is a good 'singing' hymn. Too often they favour hymns of the introspective type, sung to tunes

of a sentimental kind, wherein the chief interest, if any, lies in the harmony rather than in the melody, and this type of hymn is rarely sung satisfactorily. One can readily understand that their preoccupation is rather with the words, whereas that of the congregation is always rather with the tune. This is not to say that a congregation pays no heed to the words it sings; but it is obvious that the introspective hymn needs a tune in sympathy with the words, and such tunes are rarely of the kind that lends itself to a broad effect in singing. All good organists know the type of hymn that goes 'with a swing', and if the choice of hymns were, for the most part, left to them, the standard of singing would probably be considerably higher. In this connection, it is worthy of note that many ministers are nowadays content to leave the entire choice of hymns to the organist, if they feel he is worthy of such a responsibility, only altering the selection if a particular hymn be wanted to re-echo the mood of the sermon, or for some other special reason. In churches where this plan is adopted, there is very rarely cause for regret; and the minister is freed from an additional task which he has often too little time to perform satisfactorily. A further advantage is that the organist feels he is not a mere nonentity, ordered to play this and that and nothing else, but that he shares the responsibility of ordering the service with the minister; and is bound in consequence to think more highly of his position and of his work in the church. It cannot too strongly be emphasized that the right choice of hymns can make a service, just as the wrong choice can mar it, however excellent the quality of the preaching may be.

Perhaps a few words as to the type of hymn that is

finding increasing favour, and what may be described as the 'right choice of hymn', may be helpful. In the first place, practically all hymns of the 'praise' type. They are usually set to fine, broad tunes of the quality of *Old Hundredth*, *Praise my Soul*, *Duke Street*, *Hanover*, and *Leoni*. Secondly, hymns with a strong nature feeling, such as are usually grouped under the heading 'His goodness in Providence' or some similar title. Thirdly, hymns for seasons, functions, and occasions of the Church, such as morning, evening, church anniversaries, the call to worship and missionary enterprise. Fourthly, national and social, hymns for the people and for peace (of which there are too few in our books). Fifthly, hymns of courage and conflict (with one or two exceptions of undignified blatancy). These divisions are, of course, by no means clear-cut; there are a few poor tunes within, just as there are a few good ones without; but all in all, perhaps, they give some clue to what experience has found congregations will sing with heart and spirit, and to the type of hymn that is tending more and more to be chosen.

As to what is the 'wrong choice of hymn', detailed discussion is unnecessary; but for those in doubt it is not a bad plan to read through the words of a hymn and ask oneself: 'Does this hymn definitely inspire me to sing?' If the answer be 'No', it is obvious what to do: the choice of such a hymn may probably throw a cloud over the whole service. Our ministers and organists are definitely anxious for the people to sing; but the people cannot sing if the hymn does not lend itself to good singing.

Some people are inclined to believe that the presence of a choir rather hinders congregational singing.

Indeed, there is a tendency, as at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, the Guildhouse (Eccleston Square), and the Christian Science churches, to mention three instances, where the work of the choir is either reduced to a minimum, or else dispensed with altogether, the congregation being definitely the important factor in the musical part of the service. It need scarcely be said that most church musicians, and those who believe that there is a part for both congregation and choir in the service, do not look upon the tendency with any favour. Without doubt, the presence of a choir is in some cases inimical to congregational singing, and it is generally known, for instance, that the type of choir common in America, led by a professional quartet, does not help the people to join in the service. The organist is unwilling to give the requisite body to the accompaniment for fear of drowning the professional singers, with the result that his accompaniments become finicky and meticulous, and discouraging to the people. To say, however, that a good choir and congregational singing are incompatible is simply to confess that the problem has not been studied in its proper light; for there is without doubt a place for both in the service. There is, for instance, the possibility of antiphonal singing between people and choir; there are the devices mentioned above for giving a special part to the choir, while the congregation sings the melody; and there are the extra-liturgical services of cantatas and other church music both on Sunday evenings after service and during the week, to which the energies of the choir can be directed. There are even anthems with a simple 'people's part' which can be learnt at congregational practices, with a more elaborate part for the choir: there are church cantatas by Bach and others,

interspersed with chorales for the congregation to sing, in which the full effect is not obtained unless they take their share. Those who have heard the 'St. Matthew' Passion, for instance, at St. Paul's Cathedral cannot fail to have been thrilled by the effect of the interpositions of the huge congregation singing these chorales with the full accompaniment of organ and orchestra. Choir and congregation, both have their part to play in the Church's song: they are, or should be, complementary to each other and not antagonistic.

Finally, when the right choice of hymn, an inspiring method of singing it, a building which is 'live' acoustically, and all other points mentioned above are taken into consideration, there still remains one aspect of the matter, namely, the personality and musical ability of the organist; and here one is glad to note, our churches are more and more alive to the necessity of appointing a responsible and well-trained musician to this important post. For when all is said and done, the kind of accompaniment provided by the organist is perhaps the most potent factor in good congregational singing. Some organists, both professional and amateur, seem to possess the ability adequately to lead and accompany the congregation, which others, for some mysterious reason, however excellent their gifts lack entirely. This is not a belittlement of the amateur in favour of the professional, or vice versa; but other things being equal, it is more and more being found that the management of the musical part of the service is more satisfactorily left in the hands of the professional. It stands to reason that this is often necessarily the case; for the long training involved will generally have taught him the right management of the organ for good accompaniment; his knowledge of

harmony and counterpoint will show him the pitfalls to be avoided when he tries the necessary task of varying the harmonies for unison singing; his musical taste, assiduously cultivated during years of acquaintance with great music, will enable him to distinguish between the shoddy and the fine tune, to the ultimate benefit of the congregation. This being so, it is a welcome fact that the higher salaries now generally offered provide more inducement for the professional musician than was previously the case. It is a truism that the type of playing the churches will get is dependent exactly on the salary offered. If they offer a good salary, they will get a good musician; and the reverse is equally true. The improving standard of music in churches is due largely to the generally rising level of taste that was spoken of at the beginning of this chapter; but the employment of the good musician must also be held partly responsible. Even so, there is room for improvement. One still hears of churches that can afford to install an expensive organ, but still continue to pay a miserable pittance to the organist, which in many cases is insufficient to pay his fares to and from the church, quite apart from the organ music which it is essential for him to have. A tribute may well be paid to those who continue their faithful work under circumstances such as these, for the love of it, and for nothing else; but in many instances, how unnecessary it is! The difference to the musical part of the service made by the provision of a good musician at an adequate fee proves, in many cases, to be tremendous.

To those having the welfare of church song at heart the final word may well be one of encouragement. While much more remains to do, much has already been done, as a comparison between the hymns in use thirty

years ago and those in use to-day will show. A steady progress in the elimination of the weak and the substitution of the strong is quietly and unobtrusively being made; more thought is being given to the problems of corporate worship; the standard of the music sung is everywhere higher, and the future is generally encouraging. One may hope that these achievements are but stepping-stones to a conception of music in churches finer and nobler than anything we of to-day can compass.

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